


# Personal Recollections

1849-1865

Jane Martin Johns



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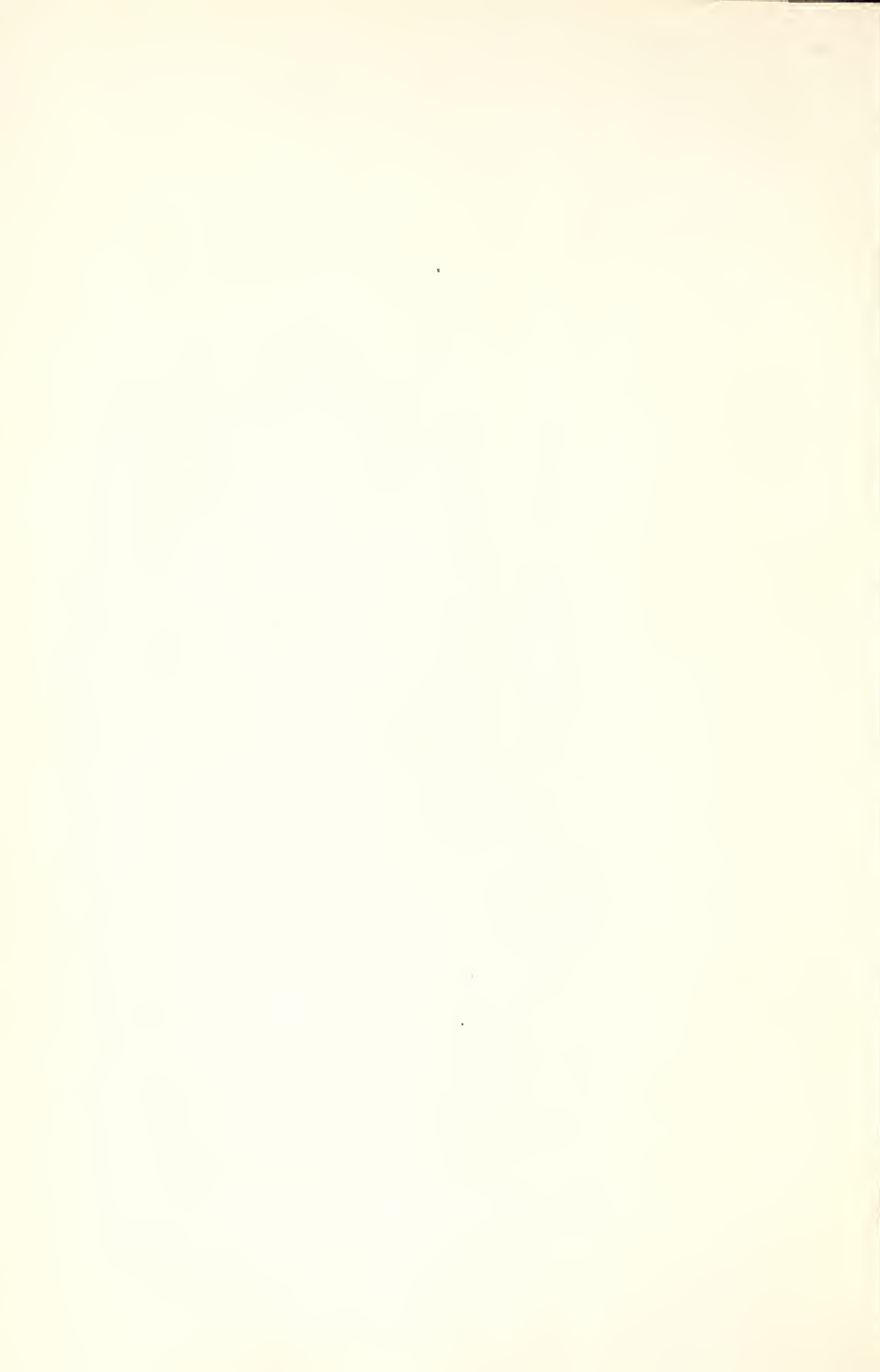
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Mrs. Jane Martin Johns



# PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

OF

Early Decatur  
Abraham Lincoln  
Richard J. Oglesby  
and The Civil War



*By* JANE MARTIN JOHNS

*Edited by* HOWARD C. SCHAUB



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of the American Revolution

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By  
JANE MARTIN JOHNS

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## FOREWORD



**D**ATIONS and men and women are born, run their course and die, but the records of their lives and deeds go on either as a warning or encouragement to those who follow after.

The Decatur Chapter of the Society of Daughters American Revolution was formed with fifteen charter members, February 4, 1896, at the home of Miss Myra Belle Ewing, who was elected its first Regent. The chapter now numbers eighty-five members with the following officers:

Regent.....	Mrs. Frank P. Roach.
Vice Regent.....	Mrs. Mary E. Haworth.
Secretary.....	Miss Harriet C. Jenkins.
Treasurer.....	Mrs. Henrietta S. McNulta
Registrar.....	Miss Mary L. Johnson.
Historian.....	Mrs. W. A. Cash.
State Historian.....	Mrs. E. L. Pegram.

As stated in the Constitution the object of the organization is: "To perpetuate the memory of the spirit of the men and women who achieved American independence, by the acquisition and protection of historic spots; by the erection of memorial tablets and monuments; by the encouragement of historical research; by the promotion and celebration of all patriotic anniversaries and by the preservation of documents, relics and records." The members are also pledged to cherish, maintain and extend the institutions of America; to foster true patriotism and love of country and to aid in securing for mankind all belongings of liberty.

While Decatur Chapter has not distinguished itself by any great achievements it has accomplished some worthy work. In June, 1905, the members placed a large granite boulder bearing a

suitably engraved bronze tablet to mark the site near Decatur of the first home in Illinois of Abraham Lincoln.

In the year 1907 the old Macon County courthouse where Abraham Lincoln practiced law was moved to Fairview Park, rebuilt and restored to its original condition. It is now the Chapter House of the Decatur Chapter Daughters American Revolution.

In June, 1912, the grave of William Dickey, a soldier of the Revolutionary War, who was buried at Argenta, Ill., was suitably marked with a handsome bronze marker.

One great duty which devolves upon our organization is the collecting and compiling of local history.

While taking up the study of the history of Illinois at one of our meetings at the home of Miss Carrie Powers, Mrs. Jane M. Johns gave a reminiscence of Decatur and Macon County in the early days. She said: "The usefulness and intensity of life in those years can never be realized by the younger generation. Like conditions can never again exist."

This expression suggested to some of the members of the chapter the advisability of asking Mrs. Johns to write a book relating the experiences and problems which confronted the pioneers of Macon County.

Notwithstanding the great amount of work and research this entailed upon her, she has kindly consented to do it. Appreciating as we do the literary ability of Mrs. Johns and her marvelous recollections of the days that are no more; also realizing how few persons we now have with us who lived in Decatur and Macon County during the eventful years of which she writes, it is indeed with pride and pleasure that the Decatur Chapter Daughters American Revolution present this work with the faith that it will interest many readers; preserve a record of many important events and add a valuable chapter of authentic history to the records of our illustrious state—

"Not without thy wondrous story  
Illinois, Illinois,  
Can be writ the nation's glory,  
Illinois, Illinois."

What could be more fitting than that the wondrous story of Illinois should be writ in chapters by the old residents of each county and these chapters be bound into a volume that shall be a true, complete, and priceless chronicle of the events of the pioneer days of our state?

LUCY ELEANOR ROANE CASH,

Decatur, Ill., August, 1912.

Historian Decatur Chapter Daughters American Revolution.

## PREFACE



THE Decatur chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution has, in pursuance of its desire to "preserve local history," asked me to write these recollections.

Though rather a serious undertaking for a woman of eighty-five years, I commenced the work, little dreaming of the magnitude it would eventually assume.

My intention has been, not to write a history, but to tell a story, in a form that will incite this generation to an interest in, and a study of, the most interesting and important period in the history of our nation.

My chief purpose was to chronicle the magnificent work of the women of the county during the Civil war, but my story, almost unconsciously, grew into a record of Decatur's part in that history-making epoch.

We are in danger of losing the true inwardness of the soul-stirring times, when the life of the nation was in peril. It has proved almost impossible to secure reliable statistics of local events. No files of local newspapers dealing with that period have been preserved, and soldiers do not seem to have been able to bring back with them letters from home. The great majority of those who were personally identified with the stirring scenes of the time have passed away, while from those who remain only dim recollections, of a trifle here and a trifle there, have been of any value.

My memory has been like a storehouse of those little Japanese cones which, when touched with fire, begin to unroll layer after layer of beautiful, iridescent, snake-like coils. An indistinct, colorless recollection, when fired by the mention of some trifling event, or the name of a friend, long since dead and almost forgot-



ten, unrolls a coil of memories, distinct and forceful. Then, when I go to history to prove it is not all an illusion, lo! other cones are fired, and the indistinct memories grow into mountains of long sought for facts.

These papers do not aspire to the dignity of history, but I have tried, by painstaking research of records, and the assistance of old letters and papers, to recall and chronicle not only the events of the times, but their causes and effects.

In order to give these papers any historical value I have been obliged to supplement my personal reminiscences with a good deal of legislative and political history, for most of which I am indebted to "Illinois, Historical and Statistical," by John Moses.

I have quoted largely from a "History of Macon County," by John Smith, a former resident of Decatur. Some extracts from that book will also appear in the appendix to this work, as a means of perpetuating valuable and interesting history of early times, which is in danger of being lost. Mr. Smith's book is out of print and is already becoming very rare.

She secretary's book of the old Hospital Aid Society has been placed at my disposal, but the records are so meagre that they have only served to fire my memory of the thrilling events which they so slightly record.

My manuscript looks to me like a mass of quotations, for when ever I have found that some one else has told the tale I wish to tell, in better language than I can command, I have quoted. Moses, Logan, Moore, Wilkie, Smith, The Decatur Review and The Decatur Herald have all reinforced my memory and added to the quotation marks, but I find that in many instances I have so cut and adapted their language that it is no longer either theirs or mine.

To Mr. Howard C. Schaub, who has kindly consented to edit these papers, I am under many obligations for assistance and advice.

The Decatur Review's catalog record of events has proved of incalculable value in securing dates of importance, and I wish to thank the management for giving me free access to it.

It has been impossible to eliminate the personal note from

these recollections without destroying their vitality and I ask the readers to kindly overlook the seeming egotism.

The task imposed upon me by the Daughters of the American Revolution has proved an absorbing and delightful one, and if by my efforts I can add a few dollars to the Decatur and Macon County Hospital fund, I shall feel amply repaid for my work.

J. M. J.

## PART FIRST—EARLY DECATUR

“Around the bowl of vanished years,  
We talk with joyous seeming,  
With smiles that might as well be tears,  
So faint, so sad their beaming.” —*Moore.*



### CHAPTER I

#### TO ILLINOIS IN 1849

On May 16, 1849, Mr. Andrew Huston and Dr. H. C. Johns left Circleville, Ohio, in a two horse buggy on a journey of exploration to the far west in search of health, fortune and a new location. They made their first stop at Lafayette, Indiana, where Dr. Johns decided he “would probably make his future home.” They decided, however, to extend their trip to Piatt County, Illinois, where Dr. Peter Hull had invited them to “hunt deer.”

In some way their route took them to Springfield, Illinois, where they separated, Dr. Johns buying a new one horse buggy and Mr. Huston taking the old rig and one horse to Chicago, where he “traded them for eighty acres of sand and swamp, near Chicago,” and returned to Circleville, via the lakes. Mr. Huston had almost forgotten that he owned that land, (of so little value did he consider it) when ten years later he was surprised at receiving an offer of, I have forgotten how many hundred dollars an acre, for his “Chicago property.” The Douglas monument now stands on that eighty acres.

Meantime Dr. Johns with his fine blooded horse and new buggy started from Springfield for Piatt County and his “deer hunt.” When about ten miles from Decatur his horse frightened at a peddler’s big red wagon, ran away, threw him from the

buggy and broke his collar bone. He was taken by the peddler to the cabin of Mr. Dingman where he was kindly cared for until Dr. Joseph King could be sent for to dress his wounds. He then became a guest of Mother Krone at the Macon House in Decatur, for three weeks, after which he became the guest of Dr. Peter Hull for three other weeks. Dr. Hull was anxious to sell his farm of sixteen hundred acres and represented its advantages to Dr. Johns in such favorable light that a trade was soon made, and Dr. Johns became the owner of "The Farms," now owned by the Allertons of Chicago.

My opposition to living in the "God forsaken state of Illinois" was overcome by the promise that in five years we would be so rich off the product of young cattle, fattened on the prairies without money and without price, that I could live anywhere I pleased.

We came west by river and canal to Lafayette, where we bought a two horse wagon with a hoop top and journeyed to Decatur by slow stages, sometimes camping out, but oftener being the recipients of the generous hospitality of the scattered settlers.

It was October and the boundless prairies were gay with the purple and yellow of the wild flowers, and except for the "slews," we had an enchanting journey. But the slews! Bottomless mud for hundreds of yards, where the combined efforts of two stout horses assisted by two strong men with rails (we had to carry the rails with us) as levers to lift the wheels out of the mire, sometimes required hours of hard labor to cross. The prairies, however, were so vast, so beautiful, so alluring, that I became reconciled to five years of exile in which to enjoy them.

At the Macon House a few days after my arrival I met a peddler who said he wanted to bring his old New England father to this country just once, so that he would not be so much taken by surprise when he went to heaven.

We came into Decatur by the William Street road, and when I saw the beautiful hill, crowned with lofty forest, just east of the town, I exclaimed, "I will consent to live in Illinois if I can live on that hill." That hill has been my home for over sixty



years and from it I have watched Decatur grow from a small village of four hundred inhabitants to a beautiful and prosperous city of whose record we may well be proud.

I do not expect in any sense to write a history of Decatur, yet, to make my recollections of early days of any value, I must indulge in some historical reminiscences.

The "after the war" history of Decatur will doubtless be written later by some more competent hand, and I will confine my story to the time between 1849 and 1865, a story which there will soon be no living man to recount.

## CHAPTER II

### DECATUR BEFORE 1849

On the first day of June, 1829, a commission, appointed by the legislature of Illinois, "to locate and to lay off a seat of justice" for the new county of Macon, proceeded to fulfill its mission, and the town of Decatur was "laid off after the form of Shelbyville," as required. The site selected contained twenty acres. This land was still owned by the United States government, but was afterwards entered by three citizens of the town and a deed made to the county in 1831. The boundaries of the old town were Prairie street on the north, Water street on the east, Wood street on the south and Church street on the west, with North and South Main and East and West Main dividing the town into four squares. At their intersection a plat was laid off for a court house square.

The first court house was built of logs, but was supplanted in 1838 by a new building. It is thus described by Mr. Robert R. Montgomery, who is a native Decaturian:

The court house stood in the southeast corner of Lincoln square. It was built of brick and was about forty feet square and two stories high, with roof sloping up from all sides to a cupola built in the center. The front door was on the north side and opened into a hallway, on either side of which were the offices of the court. At the south end there was a stairway leading to the second floor on which was the court room. A stairway from the second floor led up to the cupola. Around the cupola there was a platform with a railing enclosing it. From this point there was a fine outlook over the town and country.

The court house square was used for years as a wagon yard and camping ground for the teams of farmers, who came to town on business. Owners of property, fronting on the square, seriously opposed any restrictions of these privileges.

When I came to Decatur, in 1849, it was a village of a few hundred inhabitants which showed all the marks and scars of an abandoned effort to build a city. Two large frame buildings,

evidently intended for hotels, stood unfinished and unoccupied, one on the southeast corner of Central Park and one on the corner of West Main and Edward streets. In every direction, radiating from the court house square, streets were laid out and lots staked off, with an occasional half-finished foundation for a building.

I found great difficulty in getting any reasonable account of this state of affairs. I could find no old citizen who knew its history. *That* happened, or, *this* was done, "when the railroad was surveyed through Decatur." What railroad or by whom surveyed, no one seemed able to answer, so I went to work to hunt for local history in state records, and found the solution of my problem so interesting that I will give a synopsis of my researches for the benefit of my readers.

In 1836 the Tenth general assembly of Illinois was convened in Vandalia. This legislature was, probably, in its personnel, the most remarkable body of law-makers ever assembled in this or, perhaps, in any other state. Among its members was a future president of the United States (Lincoln); a defeated candidate for the same high office (Douglas); six future United States senators (Ewing, Edwards, Shields, Breese, Browning and Douglas); eight men who represented at various times the state of Illinois in the national house of representatives; three who were afterwards judges of the state supreme court; one who was a member of the cabinet of President Johnson (Browning); seven future state officers, and two generals of the Union army.

John Logan, father of General John A. Logan, and Richard Cullom, father of Senator Shelby M. Cullom, were also members of this remarkable body. Nine men who represented Sangamon county, and who, with Abraham Lincoln, as their chairman, engineered the removal of the state capital from Vandalia to Springfield, were as remarkable for their stature as for their mental ability. Their combined height was fifty-four feet, an average of six feet each. For this reason they were then and have ever since been spoken of as the "long nine." This nine held the balance of power in the assembly and virtually dictated all legislation by voting solidly for or against any measure, as the vote

could be used to influence the selection of Springfield as the future capital of Illinois.

Mr. William T. Elkin, the father of Mrs. E. A. Jones and the grandfather of Mrs. Theron Powers, was one of this famous nine, and was ever after one of Mr. Lincoln's most trusted friends.

This legislature was not only distinguished by the remarkable personality of its members but was even more conspicuous because of the importance of its legislation. The capital of the state was removed from Vandalia to Springfield, and an internal improvement bill was passed which appropriated \$10,600,000 for the building of seven state-wide railroads, to be financed, built, owned and operated by the state, the theory upon which they were to be built being that these great highways of commerce could be legislated into existence, with the credit of the state as their only capital.

A fund commission was appointed, clothed with power to negotiate loans, and the honor of the state was pledged for their payment. Money was borrowed at ruinous rates, and the survey of routes for the various railroads was begun.

"An unprecedented era of speculation followed which developed into a mania. Reason was dethroned and the folly of inflation held high carnival. Towns sprung up in a night and cities in a day, on paper, each of which was destined to become the metropolis of a dense population." The establishment of the capital at Springfield and the converging of the proposed railroads in the vicinity made central Illinois a prominent factor in this scheme of improvement.

Decatur was then, as now, in the estimation of those most interested, the center from which was to radiate the entire system of transportation which would make Illinois the granary of the world. Preliminary surveys were made for at least three railroads through Decatur. Owners of real estate in the vicinity exploited and laid out additions and built hotels, each of which was expected to be the center of rival interests.

Captain David Allen was one of the first men to take advantage of the expected greatness of the new railroad center. He

owned land adjoining the original town, and with wisdom and foresight, rather unusual in those days, donated to the city a piece of land which is now Central Park, and platted the remainder of this land north and east of the proposed park. His brother-in-law, Dr. Thomas H. Read, became his partner in this venture and either they, or parties to whom they sold lots, imported brick and built a hotel, which was called the Macon House (afterwards the Revere) and a row of houses facing the park, fronting on Franklin street. These houses were built for business purposes with residences on the second floor. Mr. J. J. Peddecord's house, just north of the Macon House, was for many years the finest house in the city.

Dr. Joseph King, who had married Marietta Packard, built a substantial two story frame house on the southwest corner of Edward and William streets, which was afterwards bought by Mr. Joseph White and presented to his daughter, Anna, when she was married to Richard J. Oglesby. In this house Mr. Oglesby lived when he was elected governor. It stood until within a few years as the rear wing of his later home, now owned and occupied by Mr. James E. Bering. In this old home there have been entertained many of the most distinguished men of the country. Lincoln, Grant and Logan were frequent visitors of Governor Oglesby, who always entertained with generous hospitality.

Captain Allen, who came to Decatur in the fall of 1828, had entered from the government a quarter section of land, of which Water street is now the western and East Main the southern boundaries. A log cabin, built by a "squatter," stood where the Wilson furniture store building now stands, to which Captain Allen built a two story frame addition, which was considered a palatial mansion for many years. To this home, in 1830, he brought a bride from Tennessee. They came all the way on horseback. After Mrs. Allen mounted her horse and bade farewell to her old home a brother cut a twig from a weeping willow tree which stood by the well, and handed it to her to use as a riding whip. She carried it to Decatur, where she stuck it in the ground "near the well" of her new home, and it grew into a magnificent tree,

which for years was the beauty spot and principal ornament of Captain Allen's lawn.

This tree was cut down after Captain Allen moved from his old place in 1866. The stump was over three feet in diameter and its drooping branches had formed an arbor, under which always stood a table and a few chairs, where Mrs. Allen dispensed an old-fashioned hospitality which never allowed a casual caller to say goodbye until refreshments had been offered. A glass of home-made current wine or raspberry or blackberry cordial, with a few cookies or doughnuts, if not a piece of pound cake or rich fruit cake, was an indispensable attention offered every caller at this hospitable home.

The Baptist church was organized in Captain Allen's parlor and for many years all the services were held there. For forty years Mrs. Allen held a "female prayer meeting" every Wednesday afternoon, either in her parlor or under the sheltering branches of the willow tree. If no other worshiper came, this good woman held prayer meeting alone, though she preferred that "two or three should meet together in His name."

Decatur's first boom was suddenly brought to an end by the suspension of specie payments by the banks throughout the United States. There was pandemonium in the money market; yet the infatuation of the speculators was so great that the legislature, at a called session, refused to repeal the internal improvement act, and the fund commission under the law continued borrowing money and selling bonds at ruinous rates, until the debt of the state of Illinois, which in 1836 was \$217,276, had grown by December 2, 1839, to \$13,643,601.

The ruinous policy of simultaneously commencing all the proposed roads and constructing them in detached piece-meals, had left the state with virtually nothing to show for this vast expenditure.

"When the people awoke from their dream of fancied prosperity to find themselves staggering under the burden of a colossal public debt, when they saw their hopes shattered and financial ruin staring them in the face, they looked back upon their former

infatuation with incredulous amazement." A panic seized both the legislature and the people.

The governor called a special session of the legislature and laws were passed which practically abrogated the entire system of public improvements. "The precipitate rashness with which the stupendous work originated was only equaled by the undue haste and anxiety in disposing of the property, both real and personal, which was left from the general ruin."



### CHAPTER III.

#### THE PEOPLE AND THEIR LIVES

The bursting of this bubble left Decatur in a slough of despond. For years no new people came in, and as many of the residents as could get away were seized with the gold hunting mania and took the trail for California. David Allen, Dr. Read, the Powers brothers, Sawyers, Jasper Peddecord, Berry Cassell, the Packards, Dr. King, E. O. Smith, Stamper and Condell and a few other braves held the fort, principally because the fort held all they had, and they could not get away from it. And so for ten years Decatur remained in "statu quo."

Business of all kinds was seriously affected, indeed almost annihilated, by the financial panic. There was no money in circulation. Letters from friends sometimes remained in the post-office for weeks, for want of the 25 cents required to pay the postage. Men hauled their wheat to Chicago or St. Louis in wagons drawn by oxen over roads that did not deserve the name of cart ways, and when they arrived at their destination, could not get enough for a bushel of wheat to buy a yard of calico.

The state bank issued no bills of less denomination than \$5 and there were so few transactions requiring that amount of capital that the sight of a \$5 bill was said to be "good for sore eyes." Commodities for sale were quoted in the vernacular as worth a bit ( $12\frac{1}{2}c$ ), two bits or four bits, Mexican silver being almost the only money in circulation. A cow, giving a "right smart sprinkling of milk," could be bought for \$6; pork sold for \$1.25 a hundred net, and beef, in the quarter, at a cent and a half a pound.

"It required forty pounds of butter to buy an eight-yard calico dress pattern. Twenty-five dozen eggs would only purchase \$1 worth of coffee. It took ten bushels of corn to get eight pounds of sugar and the hog had to be a large one that would buy a pair of boots."

We paid for two rooms with board for two children, a nurse, and myself, \$8 a week, with 25 cents a day extra when my husband was at home, and we were supposed to be paying exorbitant rates because of superior accommodations.

No better characterization of the people of Macon county, as I knew them in 1849, could be given than that in Smith's History, from which I freely quote:

For true and genuine hospitality these pioneers were remarkable. Kind treatment of strangers, as well as acquaintances and neighbors, was universal. To charge a stranger for a meal or a night's lodging was an act of gross impropriety not to be tolerated. In neighborliness they were almost communistic. To divide, they were always willing. The tools of any man were almost property in common; to refuse to lend any article of personal property was an act of hostility that the whole neighborhood resented. They did not all drink, but among those who did, a refusal to drink with a friend was the unkindest cut of all. It was an act of social ostracism.

Twenty miles was a short distance to ride over bad roads to see a sick neighbor. It was never too cold or wet to lend assistance to the needy. If, by reason of sickness or misfortune, a man was unable to plant or care for his crops his neighbors turned in and did it for him.

Another characteristic of these primitive people was the confidence reposed in each other, in their promises and business relations. It is true their contracts were few and simple, but there was usually implicit confidence reposed in the honor and integrity of those with whom they dealt. A man's promise on his honor was sure to be met no matter what sacrifice was required. His word was as good as his bond, if the last cow or hog had to be given up to make it so. Promissory notes were sometimes given, but the person required to give it felt it as a slight reflection on his integrity and always breathed freer when he had borrowed the money from a neighbor and got his name off that note.

Yet they were always quick to resent a real or imaginary wrong or insult. They were always ready for a fight. The court dockets show that legal contests were never distasteful. Not the amounts involved, but the wrong to be righted, determined whether they would resort to litigation or not. Slander suits were quite common. Of the four suits brought at the first term of the Macon County circuit court, two were for slander and of the six at the next term, four were for the same thing.

On muster days, holidays and Saturdays, it was expected that there would be three or four fights in the vicinity of Johnson's grocery (as a saloon was called in those days), but there was none of the reckless use of knives or pistols, which so often disgraces frontier settlements. Quarrels were settled in the fisticuff style, and the fellow that was beaten said so and they quit, shook hands and were friends again. Those who were privileged by reason of opportunity to see the fight,—and there was always a goodly number of spectators,—exerted themselves, not to part the combatants, but to see that they had a fair fight.

Sunday mornings everybody went to church, that is everybody but the housewife, who stayed at home to prepare dinner for her

country neighbors and friends. Once in two weeks the "circuit rider" held services in the Methodist church, which stood on the back part of the lot now occupied by the Young Men's Christian Association.

The church was the first Methodist church built in Macon county. It was a frame building about thirty-eight by forty feet in size. At that time the congregation was in charge of Rev. Moses Clampitt. The church stood on Church street near Prairie avenue. The lot was donated by James Renshaw.

The building was used several years in an unfinished state, but in 1839, by special effort, it was finished and seated. As N. L. Krone remembers it, the church was built of hewn oak timbers. Two sides were weatherboarded with walnut. The other two sides were of oak clapboards.

There were no walks but several paths led from the street to the building, which was set in dense hazel brush about ten feet back from Church street.

The interior of the church was plastered, but the walls were not painted or decorated. There were two rows of seats, with one aisle in the center, the men sitting on the north side and the women on the south.

Placed in the center of the room, in the main aisle, which was four to four and a half feet wide, was a large wood heating stove. The church was lighted by candles. In the center was a chandelier, said to have been a wagon wheel, holding twelve candles. On each side wall were four candles in tin candlesticks.

There was no organ and no choir. The minister read two lines of a hymn and the congregation sang them. Then the minister read two more lines, etc.

When the new brick church on the corner of Prairie avenue and Water street, was built, the old church was used for years as a carpenter and wagon making shop. In 1862, it was rented by the Hospital Aid Society, and about forty refugees from the south were housed in it for several months. The "Brick Church" was built in 1853, at a cost of \$10,000, and was dedicated in 1854, by the Rev. Jonathan Stamper. This church was heated by a furnace, the first in Decatur.

The Baptists had a regular pastor, and church services and Sunday school were held every Sunday in one of the store buildings on Franklin street. The Christian church, which was then called "Campbellite," met in a log building on Wood street near State, which for years after was occupied by Samuel Powers as a breeding stable for fine horses.

A Presbyterian church was organized in the house of Samuel Powers, on the first day of May, 1852. There were ten members, five of whom were members of the family of David Hopkins, who was the first elder. Two others were Robert Maffit and wife, the parents of D. A. Maffit. These Presbyterians first worshiped in the court house, then in the Masonic hall on the corner of Water and Park streets.

In 1856 a brick church was built on Prairie street on a lot now occupied by the Young Men's Christian Association. For a year the basement only was used for worship, but in its unfinished state the upper room was frequently used for social entertainments.

A very successful festival had been held one evening in the unfinished church. After supper, it was discovered that there was a surplus of all kinds of provisions which had not been consumed. Mr. Thomas Lewis, the new banker and elder of the church, proposed himself as auctioneer, offering to sell everything that was left. He mounted a table, and selecting a small cake, iced and adorned with pink sugar, began the auction.

"Who bids for this beautiful and delicious pink cake?"

The bidding was not very lively, but Mr. Lewis made many witty remarks and soon had the entire assembly standing around him. He began:

"I see Mrs. —— nodding. She bids me 50 cents. Oh yes! Mrs. ——, that's right; \$1. Now gentlemen, don't let a lady beat you out of this stupendous bargain. That's right, Mr. Wood, two dollars,—going—going, oh! I knew some one would come to the rescue. A lady bids five dollars for Mr. A. T. Hill. Going—going—gone. Mr. Hill has the cake for five dollars."

The auction proceeded in this manner for sometime, Mr. Lewis knocking down cakes and pies to suppositious bidders, mostly

bachelors, who took the joke and paid for the goods with apparent good nature. After a good deal of that kind of bidding, a small ginger cake was held up.

"Who bids for this delicious ginger bread?" and quick as lightning a lady in the audience cried out:

"Five dollars for Mr. Lewis," and amid shouts of laughter, Mr. Lewis paid his \$5 and took the cake.

About two weeks after the auction, the lady who had bid the "\$5 for Mr. Lewis," was called to her door to receive a goods box about four feet square, which had arrived at the express office and had been sent to her on a dray. The box had Springfield and Bloomington express tags and the express charges were \$3.85 and drayage 25 cents.

Mrs. ——— refused to receive the box and the drayman took it back to the express office, making another charge of 25 cents. The box had actually been sent to both Springfield and Bloomington and the express charges were genuine.

In the end, which did not come for some time, Mr. Lewis paid \$3.85 express charges and 50 cents drayage and burned the box. It was reported that in addition to those charges, he had paid 50 cents to a young dry goods clerk for packing a small ginger bread in the middle of a big box of waste paper.

A Catholic church was built on West Main street in 1854, but St. Patrick's, on the corner of North and Jackson streets, was built in 1863 and was at the time the most costly church edifice in the county.

Rev. D. P. Bunn in 1854 established a Universalist society, and in 1856, St. John's Episcopal church was organized by William Prather and Cyril Fuller.

There was also an African Methodist church with fourteen members, which indicates a remarkable increase of colored population. In 1850 there was only one negro in Macon county. He lived alone in a hut near Rea's bridge and his name was used as a scarecrow for naughty children.

There was not much of the brotherly love which is now fostered by Christian Endeavor and kindred societies.

Denominational feeling was strong, even bitter, often af-

fecting social relations. But Sunday, after church, was a social holiday. Wagon loads of country people went home with their town friends to dinner. The men discussed crops and horse trades and the women compared experiences with the dye pot and exchanged new sun-bonnet patterns.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE STYLES AND A BALL

There was no Ladies Home Journal or Harpers Bazaar in those days to keep every remote hamlet in the country informed of what to wear and how to wear it. Merchants went east once in every two or three years to renew their stock of goods and brought back to their wives and daughters the latest things out in fashionable attire. But having the thing and knowing how to wear it were two very different propositions, and sometimes ludicrous results followed the effort to introduce new fashions.

The advent of a stranger in this little community was an event of general interest, especially when this stranger was a woman who brought with her the newest fashions. Some very radical changes in the style of dress had been introduced in fashionable circles in the east within two years, and the close cottage bonnets, brought by one of the merchants as a present to his wife and sister, were both grotesque and uncomfortable when worn in the manner of Gypsy hats which had preceded them. The appearance of a bride from Kentucky (Mrs. Orlando Powers) and a lady from Cincinnati, both wearing the new style of bonnet, tied demurely under the chin instead of perched on the top of the head, was welcomed by the merchant who had a case of the new bonnets for sale.

A number of cotton net night caps were sold by an enterprising clerk, who had no idea of what they were for, as the latest thing out in ball head dress, and by his recommendation, narrow lute string ribbon of two shades of contrasting color was looped around the edge as a border. A huge rosette of the same ribbon was set on top of the head.

These head dresses were worn at a ball given by Sheriff-Elect William Wheeler, in honor of his election, in the fall of 1849. The dancing at this ball began at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and continued until 4 the next morning.



In the narrow hall of the house, on each side of which was a large room occupied by the dancers, the music and the "caller" were stationed, and every square inch of space was occupied by men with their hats on, most of them chewing tobacco. If skirts had been worn very long at that time, it would have been impossible to cross that hall in safety.

When I entered the dancing room, there was a quadrille on the floor, the caller was melodiously singing "balance partners," and "all hands round." The heads of the town were there. Mr. E. O. Smith in "gum shoes" and rolled up trousers, danced vis a vis with his brother, Tom, who wore a blue blanket overcoat and danced in his stocking feet. H. B. Durfee was debonair in a blue broadcloth dress coat with brass buttons, buff vest, butternut colored jeans trousers and fancy pumps. He "cut a pigeon wing," and took a graceful step for every note of music with more skill and agility than any one I have since seen, on the stage or off.

Mrs. Peddecord and Mrs. Prather both appeared in their carefully preserved silk wedding dresses while Mrs. Rice had on a brand new "bit calico," trimmed with white braid. Miss Sarah Jane Querrey and Miss Henrietta Florey (afterward Mrs. Ed. Piper and Mrs. Charles Tuttle) wore white, with pink sashes and wreaths of pink roses. Miss Giles and Miss Ellen Giles wore stunning dresses of balzarine, the first of that new dress material to appear in Decatur. The new style of head dress, with its multicolored rosettes, was worn by two young women from Salt Creek. James Giles and Henry Elliott acted as floor managers, and "saw to it that the same men did not hog the floor for every dance."

A bounteous supper of sausage, mashed potatoes, cold slaw, hot rolls and coffee was served by Mrs. Wheeler, assisted by her neighbors, from 4 o'clock till midnight.

This ball was followed by subscription dances at the court house where "Mother" Harrell served a supper down stairs, while the dancing was on the second floor. The menu was generally fried ham and eggs, corn bread, mashed potatoes, pickles and dried apple pie. Music was furnished by amateur violinists, "Hawk" Gorin and Dick Oglesby frequently figuring in the orchestra.

## CHAPTER V.

### MOSTLY WORK FOR THE WOMEN

A popular saying of the time was, "Illinois is heaven for men and horses, but hell for women and oxen."

In every farm house the women carded the wool, spun and dyed the yarn and wove the "linsey woolsey" and the jeans and the flannel, which was afterwards made into coats and trousers for husband and sons, and dresses for themselves and the girls. Women milked the cows, attended to the chickens, made the butter and hominy, the soap and candles, rendered the lard and took care of the garden and dried fruit for winter use. Air tight canning had not been invented and sugar was too expensive to be freely used in preserving.

In those days there were no sewing machines, no ready made children's clothes, nor indeed, ready made clothes of any kind, not even stockings. There were no bake shops where one could run out and get ready made bread, cake or pie; no canned fruit nor vegetables ready to use as soon as opened; no boxes of ready made soap; no gas nor electric light, not even lamps. Candles made at home had to furnish light by which all this work was done. Then again, there were no homes with only one child. Race suicide did not exist and every house teemed with little ones to be fed and clothed and cared for.

The one and only alleviation was mutual helpfulness. Almost all social functions assumed an industrial aspect. There were sewing bees, quiltings and apple butter makings, instead of clubs, musicales and card parties. The sewing bees and quiltings were all day affairs which began at 9 o'clock in the morning and lasted till 12 at night.

My first introduction to Decatur society was at a sewing bee, given by Mrs. Rice, a sister of Mr. Jerome Gorin. The day before the party, Mrs. E. O. Smith, Mrs. Shepherd, Mrs. McClellan and Mrs. Pugh spent helping Mrs. Rice "bake and get ready,"

while Mrs. Peddecord and Mrs. Condell "cut out." There were coats and trousers, shirts, underwear and dresses, cut and ready for the next morning's work. Bread and pies and cakes galore were ready for both dinner and supper. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Shepherd stopped at the Macon House on their way home and reported to their mother, Mrs. Krone, the particulars of their day's work. One item I especially remember, was a four gallon jar of pickled beets and hard boiled eggs, which were to decorate the table next day.

Before nine o'clock the house was full. All the beds but one had been taken down to make room for the company. One bed was reserved to "put the babies on," and it was occupied by from one to half a dozen all day. Seats had been improvised by putting a plank across two chairs and throwing a quilt over it. Every woman, as she entered, was given a piece of work which had been prepared the day before, and they worked, and worked and talked. They had all learned the art of doing these two things at the same time, else they could never have talked, for they had to work.

At noon, a "passed around" luncheon was served and the work was not interrupted. About five o'clock the sewing was laid aside and preparation for supper was begun, and at six the men arrived. The standing joke as they came in was, "I am starving. I haven't had a mouthful to eat for two days," their wives protesting, "Now what a whopper! You know there was a big pot of mush on the stove, two crocks of milk all skimmed and ready for you and the children." Or, "You had a big pan of biscuits, and I bet the honey suffered."

The men were seated at the table first and served by their wives.

After the supper was over and the table cleared, many of the married ladies went home, almost all carrying generous handkerchiefs full of good things to the children. The finished work was folded and laid aside and much of the unfinished taken home by those who had nearly completed their stint, to work the button holes or sew in the sleeves.

A number of young people were added to the company and

the games began. The party had been very general, so in deference to the prejudices of those who were opposed to dancing, on the ground of its immorality, games were substituted. Forfeits seemed to be the favorite and the forfeit was always a kiss or many kisses. "Bow to the prettiest, kneel to the wittiest, and kiss the one you love best," or "put her ten feet in the well and let —— take her out," getting out being ten kisses.

The games were conducted with comparative decorum unless some girl refused to pay the penalty assigned and her determined suitor attempted to take by strength what had been denied by favor. Then there was wild screaming, wrestling and hair pulling and scratching, with laughter and applause which would have put the wildest revels of the Moulin Rouge to shame.

Later in the winter these festivities were supplanted by a remarkable three weeks series of revival meetings, remarkable in that Methodist and Baptist churches "united in brotherly love to fight the devil in his stronghold," the Baptist minister, the Rev. Mr. Gates having conceded that "God could save a soul without immersion." In these meetings there was, population considered, a larger percentage of both attendance and conversions than in the great "Billy" Sunday revival of a later date. Nor was confession made easy. Going forward and giving your hand to the evangelist and having your name recorded by his secretary was not "being born into the kingdom."

The sermons of the two traveling evangelists in charge of this revival were, as I remember them, vivid descriptions of the "torments of the damned" and the fires of hell, the brimstone being particularly emphasized. There were tedious mathematical demonstrations of the length of an endless eternity and glowing pictures of the day of judgment.

After every sermon all who were "laboring under conviction" were urged to go forward and kneel at the mourner's bench, where those who were already saved "wrestled" with them with tears and groans and cries of agony. Occasionally some poor soul would "see the light" and shouts of joy proclaimed that he had "found his Savior."

Sometimes, some one who had "resisted the spirit" and refused

to go forward to the mourner's bench, would be suddenly overcome by "the power," and from the body of the church cry out for forgiveness. One evening the whole congregation were startled by a frantic scream from one of the back pews. "Oh, I see the raging fire! I smell the brimstone! Oh, God, save—Oh, Christ, save me!" and a fainting young woman was carried into the lobby.

Occasionally these harrowing scenes were relieved by the ludicrous. A tall fleshy woman, who had suddenly "found pardon," sprang to her feet, threw one arm around the evangelist, who was a small man, and pounding him on the back with her fist, shouted "glory!" with every blow, until she was forcibly unclasped to prevent the poor little man being pounded to a jelly. This religious hysteria was all pervading and contagious and it took a strong will to resist its influence.

Preceding this revival there had been a great temperance movement. A traveling "reformed drunkard" had lectured two or three evenings, giving graphic and disgusting pictures of his state and that of his family before he took the pledge. A total abstinence society was formed and the pledge signed by a great many people, chiefly young people. There were few homes at that time where a bottle of whisky or brandy was not one of the necessary family supplies. Peach and apple brandy of domestic manufacture were abundant and pure, in the sense of the term as compared with present day products, but lager beer was absolutely unknown. Almost every family manufactured its own "root beer" of an unintoxicating nature.

There were very few men of middle age who did not habitually take a "before breakfast toddy." Yet there was not much over indulgence and a drunkard was looked upon with horror and contempt. I think there was only one saloon in Decatur, but there men assembled to play cards and drink. Card playing was not indulged in as a social amusement at all, but seven up and poker attracted a good many men to the saloon where, it was rumored, gambling was freely indulged.

One night the wife of a prominent citizen, too many of whose evenings were spent away from home, concluded that she would

find out where they were spent, and alone, and in the darkness, she proceeded on an investigating tour. Peeping between the bottles displayed in the window of the saloon, she discovered the absentee, seated at a card table, quietly enjoying a game of seven up. She seized a club (not a hatchet) and first broke every pane of glass in that window; then entering the saloon, drove out every man, broke every bottle and spilled the contents, and then quietly went home to enjoy her triumph. I think this was the first "Carrie Nation" episode in history.



## CHAPTER VI.

### BUILDING RAILROADS

The railroad fever in the state did not abate with the collapse of the internal improvement bubble, but statesmen began to see that something more tangible than state credit must be devised whereby the public domain could be utilized for public improvement. All idea of state ownership was abandoned but great effort was made to secure state aid to private corporations, and congress was besieged with bills granting railroad corporations the right to preempt the public land through which the proposed line was to pass.

This plan was opposed by Judge Douglas in the senate on the ground that the granting of land should be conferred on the state and not upon an irresponsible private corporation, and on January 3, 1848, he introduced a bill for the granting of land to the state of Illinois to aid in the construction of a road from Cairo to Chicago. A precedent had been established when, in 1827, congress had granted to the state of Illinois the alternate five sections of land upon each side of the Illinois and Michigan canal, "for the purpose of aiding in its construction." The struggle to pass this bill was a long and tedious one and had many rather amusing episodes, some of which are worth recording as illustrative of congressional methods.

A grant of land to the state of Illinois was violently opposed by the senators of the southern states on constitutional grounds. Judge Douglas then conceived the idea of connecting the Mobile & Ohio railroad with the Illinois Central. He went to Mobile and succeeded in interesting enough influential men and corporations in his proposition to secure instructions from the legislatures of Alabama and Mississippi to their senators in Washington, requesting them to vote for the land grant bill. When Mr. Douglas' bill was so amended as to include the Mobile & Ohio road in its benefits the constitutional objections to the bill disappeared and



it passed the senate, the objecting southern senators entering heartily into the project.

Opposition in the house of representatives was much more difficult to overcome, but John Wentworth, with the assistance of the entire Illinois delegation, succeeded in effecting trades and making combinations which, it was claimed, would give a majority of thirteen in favor of the bill. When it was finally brought before the house for action, its friends found that by absenteeism or for some other cause, they were in a minority of one and it became necessary to stave off the vote or suffer defeat. I will give the rest of the story in Judge Douglas' own words:

At the critical moment when a vote would have been sure defeat, Harris, of Illinois, quickly and as pale and white as a sheet, jumped to his feet and moved that the house go into "committee of the whole" on the slavery question. There were fifty members ready with speeches on that subject and the motion was carried.

Harris came to me in the lobby and stated that the effect of this motion was to place the bill at the bottom of the calendar. I asked Harris how long it would be before it would come up again. He said not in this session; that there were ninety-seven bills ahead of it.

I then racked my brain for many nights to find a way to get rid of the bills and it at last occurred to me that if the same course was pursued with other bills, it would place them likewise in turn at the foot of the calendar and thus bring the Illinois bill at the head again. The same motions would each have to be made ninety-seven times and, while the first motion might be made by some of our friends, it would not do for some of us to make the second. I finally seized on Mr. ———, a political opponent but a personal friend, who agreed to make the second motion to go into the committee of the whole as often as was necessary. He agreed to it as a personal favor to me.

Then Harris, in the house, sometimes twice in the same day, either made or caused to be made the first motion, when Mr. ——— would immediately make the second. Finally, by this means, the Illinois bill got to the head of the docket. Harris that morning made the first motion to take up the bill "granting lands to the state of Illinois."

The opposition was taken completely by surprise and said that there must be some mistake as the bill had gone to the bottom of the calendar. It was explained and the speaker declared the motion all right, and the bill "donating to the state of Illinois every alternate section of land for the distance of six miles on each side of the proposed line of the Illinois Central railroad," was passed by a majority of three.

And thus was assured the building of the Great Illinois Central railroad.

It is an interesting fact that Douglas and Shields in the senate, and Lincoln, Robert Smith, McClernand and Baker in the house, who were active workers for the passage of this land grant bill, had all been members of the famous Tenth Illinois general assem-

bly, which passed the Internal Improvement scheme for which they all voted. However, whatever blame might be attached to them for errors of judgment and action on that occasion was nobly atoned for by their subsequent efforts in securing the passage of a measure which has not only obliterated the enormous debt created by the Internal Improvement system, but secured to the state an income which will not only increase in the future, but will remain perpetual.

There were several proposed routes for the Illinois Central through Macon county, one of which crossed the Sangamon river six miles west of Decatur, and was pronounced by Engineer Charles Tuttle cheaper and more feasible than the original survey made fourteen years before, which passed through that city. The proposed change of location of the road caused great excitement, but a determined and united effort on the part of prominent citizens, led by the Honorable E. O. Smith, resulted in the abandonment of the "cut off route," and the road was located through Decatur.

The location of the depot then became a matter of controversy which was finally settled by the purchase of a forty acre tract of land east of Broadway and north of North street by Prather, Martin and Gatling (of Gatling gun fame), who donated ten acres and the right of way to the road, provided the depot was placed upon the land donated.

Simultaneously with the survey for the Illinois Central railroad the old project of a cross state road was rejuvenated and a new corporation commenced the construction of the Great Western, now the Wabash, through Decatur, and the town took on new life.

Contracts for the building of two railroads brought with them the necessary complement of foreign laborers, an element which had previously been almost unknown in the vicinity and one which was not very cordially welcomed by the native Americans. The jealous conflicts between rival gangs of German and Irish kept peaceful citizens in constant terror.

There was a time when for almost three weeks Decatur was practically under martial law. Mr. Robert R. Montgomery, who

was a boy at the time and an interested onlooker, has suggested to me that the episode is one of the most interesting in Decatur's pre-railroad history. I give his story in his own words:

An incident that occurred during this time made a lasting impression on my mind. It was in 1855 or '56, when the construction work of the Great Western (now Wabash) railroad was under way. This road was built into Decatur from the west. Where the road crosses Stevens creek, about two miles west of Decatur, there was some heavy grading work to be done. There were two gangs of workmen in this vicinity under different management. In one camp there were Irish; in the other Germans; all of them fresh from the old country.

A controversy arose between the two camps, and the following Saturday the Irish came to town, got full of bad whisky, went back to their camp, armed themselves with picks, shovels and clubs, and made a raid or charge on the German camp. A battle royal ensued.

Early Sunday morning the town was aroused. Reports were current that several persons had been killed and others badly wounded.

In a small room in the southeast corner of the second floor of the old court house were stored the arms and ammunition of the Macon county soldiers that served in the Indian and Mexican wars. The arms were mostly old flintlock muskets with bayonets. On the above mentioned Sunday morning the sheriff called a mass meeting of citizens and asked for volunteers to act with and under him in making the arrest of the rioters. (It might be well to mention that there were scarcely more men in the town than there were in these railroad camps).

A company of twenty-five or thirty men was formed and armed with these old old muskets. These men, led by the sheriff, some on horseback, some on foot, marched down to the camps, arrested the offenders and brought them up for trial. A great commotion ensued, but everybody lived to tell the tale, so far as I am able to say.

William F. Martin, who was clerking in Peddecord's store at the time, gives a more detailed history of this first labor war in Decatur.

At the big "Stevens creek fill" on the Great Western, there were two contractors doing the work, one on each side of the creek. One of them employed entirely Irish laborers, and the other, German. The close proximity of these two gangs caused constant friction and bloody fights were numerous. Upon one occasion the rumor came to town that the Germans were exterminating the Irish. On the Illinois Central, just at the Prairie street crossing, a large gang of Irishmen were working for John Post, who had the grading contract for one mile of that road. These men determined to march to the rescue of their countrymen at Stevens creek. They armed themselves with pickaxes, shovels and shillalaws and marched up East Main street.

At the courthouse square they were intercepted by a hastily collected posse of deputy sheriffs, who had been armed with rusty muskets taken from the court house. The bayonets of these muskets looked rather formidable to the marching men when they encountered a solid phalanx of armed sheriffs drawn up across the head of East Main street. It did not take long to convince them that they had better return peaceably to their own camp.

There was comparative quiet for a few days, but the sheriff thought it wise to continue his armed deputies in authority. A number of warrants had been sworn out against the rioters on Stevens creek, and it was determined to arrest the men on pay-day. Deputies to the number of ten or twelve were ordered to surround the camp and arrest the accused men as their names were called to receive their pay.

The arrests were successfully accomplished and the prisoners were marched to the court house where they were kept under guard for three days before their trial. Rumors of an attempted rescue were rife and the sheriff's posse was indefinitely increased and guards were relieved every four hours. What was the final outcome of that incident, I have been unable to learn.

A few days later one of the contractors failed to receive his money on the date announced as pay day. His gang struck and refused to work until they were paid. They became riotous and the sheriff thought it best to call out his posse again.

The money came after a few days delay and an office was opened in the room of the circuit clerk in the court house. A window on the south side of the room was opened, and the men paid as their names were called. At 5 o'clock not half the men had been paid, but the window was closed and it was announced that payments would be resumed at 8 o'clock the next morning.

The men began to clamor and declare that they would have their money that night or they would break in and take it. The door of the clerk's office was locked and barricaded, but the crowd of anxious men packed the hall to suffocation, and attempted to batter down the door.

Half a dozen armed men inside the room pushed a long table across the doorway and mounting it, stood with pistols cocked,

ready to defend the entrance. When the door was finally broken down half a dozen men were precipitated head foremost against the table by the pressure of those who stood in the rear. The men standing on the table pointed their pistols directly at the crowd and called, "Halt, or we will fire!" This started the pressure in the opposite direction and men knocked each other down in their efforts to escape.

The payment of the men proceeded in an orderly manner next morning, and the strike was ended. This military demonstration proved very effective and the remaining years of railroad construction passed without strike or riot.

## CHAPTER VII.

### GAY TIMES IN THE FIFTIES

The influx of new business, new enterprises and new people soon created a new social standard and Decatur began to put on metropolitan airs. The hordes of foreign laborers that the railroad building had brought to the town had disrupted society. The classes and the masses had begun to segregate. The lawyer and the merchant no longer danced vis-a-vis with the mechanic and the laborer. The lady of the house and her "hired girl" did not draw straws to settle the question of which should go to the ball and which should stay at home to take care of the children. We began to speak of "society."

There were scores of hospitable homes in Decatur in the late fifties where the old settlers gave the new comer a cordial welcome. Newly imported bankers, speculators, manufacturers, engineers and contractors, with their families, when added to the old social element which had made the Wheeler ball and the Rice sewing bee so enjoyable and so memorable, constituted a social circle which for hospitality, wit, beauty, and good breeding has never been surpassed in Decatur.

In 1853 William Powers built a block of stores on the south side of East Main street with Powers Hall on the third floor and we had theaters and concerts, lectures and festivals. Literary societies and musical unions superseded spelling contests and singing schools. Church sociables and fairs took the place of quilting bees and apple parings and the waltz and schottische eliminated the musical call for quadrilles.

Married people were society leaders, and, though chaperonage was not essential to respectability, there were no exclusively young people's functions. Neither were there ladies' luncheons nor afternoon teas. Men and their wives went out together. It would have been almost an insult to invite the wife without her husband.



With the new people came new homes and more gaiety. Mr. Mason, the gay widower, with his three accomplished daughters, who were later Mrs. McMullin, Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Hildebrandt, were among the first. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hays, with Frank and Nannie, Mr. John Race and his bride, Mr. Joseph White and family, all kept open house.

The home of Mrs. Ann Harrison (mother of Mrs. W. H. Ennis) was a social center. Three jolly widows and a pretty girl were the attraction. Mrs. Harrison was a model hostess while Mrs. Edmunson, afterwards Mrs. H. C. Bradsby, was a born society leader. The gentle and attractive Mrs. Berry, with Miss Louie Harrison, (Mrs. William H. Ennis), who was an accomplished musician, completed a quartet that made their home one of the most attractive in the town.

One interesting element of the social situation was the large number of eligible bachelors, whose presence gave zest to the hospitalities of the ladies. Richard J. Oglesby, Lowber Burrows, William Ennis, Charles Tuttle, Sheridan Wait, Alonzo Burgess, William Wells, Charles Thatcher and other matrimonial catches were almost all safely landed in wedlock's silken meshes by Decatur girls.

A great deal of musical and histrionic talent developed itself in this little coterie and found vent in amateur operas, theatricals, tableaux and masque balls. One of the favorite amusements was charades. A word selected by the actors was illustrated, first in syllables and then as a whole, by clever dialogue, acting and tableaux, and the audience was left to guess the meaning of the performance. Charade parties were very numerous and very popular.

I think the first entertainment ever given in Decatur for the benefit of the poor was a masque ball at the Revere House in the winter of 1855. Destitution and poverty were terms unknown to the pioneers, when all had been friends and neighbors, but conditions were changed. "The poor we had with us always." There had been a good deal of sickness among the railroad laborers, and it was reported that two or three widows with small children were very destitute. It was suggested that our merry making



might be transformed into money making and little children be made happy by our fun.

The invitations were issued and two weeks were given for preparation. It was stipulated that every guest must appear at the parlor of the Revere House at 7:30, masked and in character costume, "no dominos." At 8 o'clock, gentlemen were to select their partners and make the grand march to the dining room to inaugurate the dance.

The two weeks were passed in insidious attempts to mystify. Behind locked doors costumes were being prepared, but occasionally some bit which had mysteriously strayed into the parlor, would be hastily concealed, after the visitor had caught a glimpse of it.

When the appointed night arrived husbands dressed down town and wives at a neighbor's house, and at half past seven a hundred or more maskers had appeared in the Revere House parlors. One by one the ladies, seated demurely around the room, were claimed as partners by some monk or knight or negro minstrel. A few minutes before 8 o'clock two gorgeously attired Highlanders in kilts and pouches, plaid stockings and bare knees, Scotch caps and heron feathers, circled the room in search of partners. A little Scotch lassie, who had been timidly shrinking behind a big Irish woman with flopping cap border, was soon seen, recognized and claimed by the "braw Highland laddie" with a whispered, "Ah, Lizzie, I knew you the moment I saw you; my heart told me where to find you. You were waiting for me, weren't you?"

At 12 o'clock, when masks were ordered off, this sentimental swain discovered that he had been all the evening dancing with and whispering sweet nothings into the ear of his married sister.

A charming widow, who as Lucy Long, with black face and shortened dress, had unguardedly betrayed her identity to a number of her admirers, early in the evening changed costumes with a Quaker girl from Chillicothe, O., and had the pleasure for the rest of the evening of being an onlooker at her own popularity.

The ball netted \$120, and the heart of the widow was made glad.

One of the peculiar cogs in the social machine of those early days was the serenade. Not the song of a lone swain, who thrummed his guitar under the window of his lady love, but the organized glee club that made night melodious with duets, trios and quartets. George Wessels, Theodore Hildebrandt, Bob McCabe, Frank Hays and Will Martin, were the charter members of one of these clubs. They had purchased a portable melodeon which they carried with them on their nightly rounds to give strength and volume to their musical productions. Any gallant, fortunate enough to have a voice, might join them for one night only, if he wanted to honor a particular lady. If he could not sing, he was allowed to pump the melodeon, and in return to treat to the supper after the night's labors were over.

The lady complimented by a serenade was supposed to be fast asleep with lights out and curtains drawn, but it was a singular fact that a beautifully arranged bouquet was always ready to be thrown from the window, or the parlor would suddenly be ablaze with light and a fully dressed lady would invite the minstrels to coffee and cake.

Rival swains soon began to contend for these honors, and the newly organized brass band was called into service to help make the night melodious. It was not at all unusual for the voices of the glee club, singing "Wake Lady," to be drowned by a full band of brass horns not a stone's throw away. These midnight serenades were more popular with the young folks than with their elders, and there were times when cold water, instead of bouquets, was thrown from the window.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CLOUDS FOLLOWED BY PROSPERITY

The state of Illinois was in bad repute after the failure of its railroad bubble. The state debt threatened either repudiation or prohibitory taxation. Its bank notes were discounted in every state in the Union. The timber lands, which were thought to be the only lands available for farming, had all been entered or purchased by speculators and immigration had been checked by rumors of the exceeding unhealthfulness of the state.

"Milk sickness," a disease fatal to both humanity and cattle, was reported as prevalent in almost every county. *Ague* rendered the life of its victims unbearable, and *ague* prevailed in every home.

There were three distinct species of this disagreeable disease. First there was the "every other day chill and fever." If you were fortunate enough to escape that, then you were liable to have the "third day *ague*," which shook harder and burned with fiercer fever than did the regulation "chill." If you escaped both of these, then "dumb *ague*" was probably your fate, and from this you did not even have the relief of a periodic rest. Everybody had either the one or the other. People who were victims of the "regular chills" set the hour on every alternate day when they expected to shake with unbearable cold for an hour or two, and then parch with fever and thirst for a similar period, followed by a drenching perspiration, which left its victim willing to die. With one day's interval, the program was repeated. The hour of attack seldom varied over fifteen minutes. Families were fortunate where the "chill day" of some of its members alternated with the "well day," of others. Peruvian bark and "yarbs" of various kinds could sometimes be depended on to break the *daily periodicity*, but a return was certain in either three or six weeks. No one hoped to escape.

Previous to the advent of railroads, prairie land was not con-

sidered a desirable investment. It was the almost unanimous opinion of the early settlers that the boundless rolling prairie, with all its fertility and beauty, could never pass from the ownership of the government, that it was utterly unfit for cultivation and had no value except for grazing purposes. They believed it would always remain a great commons where any man, fortunate enough to possess a farm on its timbered borders, would have unlimited and endless pasture for his stock. A few "cattle kings" gathered together large herds which were pastured on the rich grass for from seven to eight months and then driven to Indiana and Ohio to be fattened in the fall.

Cattle buyers seldom bought one or a dozen head. They dealt only in herds of a hundred or more. The small farmer who owned a few cows and calves found it more advantageous to sell his stock in the spring than to herd them. Frequently some "cattle man" would agree with the farmer to protect his cows and calves from molestation during the grazing season on condition that he alone was to be the purchaser of the yearlings.

By a sort of law of courtesy the cattle men kept off of each other's range, but all stock not recognized as belonging to some herd was "kept on the run." In this way, a large proportion of the desirable grazing was portioned out and usurped by comparatively few men, and such great "cattle kings" as Strawn, Gillett, Harris, Duncan, Bacon and others grew rich and powerful.

Another rule of courtesy was strictly enforced. The herds must not encroach on the grazing within a limited distance from an enclosed farm. Thus the farmer, with the help of prairie hay, to be had for the cutting, was able to keep his young stock till they were of marketable age.

It was the universal opinion of all the old settlers that there was no remedy for these conditions. Fencing the boundless prairies was utterly impracticable. Four-fifths of the land was too wet for cultivation. No plow had been invented that could break the tough sod of the highest land. But necessity is the mother of invention. A way must be found to give a marketable value to the immense tracts of prairie included in the land grant of the Illinois Central railroad. The inventive genius of the

world was enlisted in solving the problem. Horticulturists began experimenting with plants for hedges; engineers and scientists gave earnest attention to the drainage question and mechanics made sod plows.

Honey locust, willow and osage orange were exploited for hedges and there were miles of experimental hedges set out. It was finally conceded that the osage orange would be the universal fence and large nurseries were devoted to its cultivation and millions of plants sold. And so the vast cattle ranges were soon divided into fields and pastures and orchards.

Immigrants of an enterprising class, who brought with them not only money but improved ideas of farming and manufactures, began to pour into the town and the surrounding country.

Speculators, engineers and contractors found Decatur a desirable place of residence. The old plats of additions were reestablished and lots sold at remunerative prices. William H. Ennis, Charles Tuttle, William Martin, Sullivan Burgess, Sheridan Wait and other enterprising men began to exploit Decatur as a rising town. Henry Prather, Samuel Powers, Richard J. Oglesby, Silas Packard and other old residents had returned from California, bringing with them capital for investment. New banks, new stores, new law offices were opened by the men who, two years before, played marbles in the shade of the court house.

Prosperity came with the building of the railroads and the opening up of prairie farms. Three banks were added to the business enterprises of Decatur. David Kline, as president, and Charles Fuller, as cashier, came from somewhere east, and opened a bank in the building on Franklin street that had been previously used as a school room by Miss Maria Giles, and by the Baptist church as a place of worship. Mr. Jasper Peddecord added to his extensive business of general merchandise, pork packing and commission house, a new bank in which he installed Mr. Lowber Burrows, a gay and interesting young gentleman from Philadelphia, as "chief cook and bottle washer."

This bank, soon after its organization, was located in the block on the southwest corner of Central park, where it remained for more than sixty years. The back room of that bank was for

years the unorganized gentlemen's club of Decatur. Here met the men of affairs and influence to discuss business, politics and society, and listen to Jasper Peddecord's dry wit and Dick Oglesby's jolly stories.

For many years almost every movement of importance to the welfare of Decatur was conceived and brought forth in that same back room, which deserves a memorial tablet, "To the Wisdom and Wit of Early Decatur."

This building is now torn down to be replaced with a new bank building.

The third bank was called the Railroad bank, and was established in a building on Merchant street, afterwards for many years occupied by the Danziesen meat market. Mr. Lewis, president of this bank, made himself very prominent in church and social affairs and for about two years "cut quite a splurge" in Decatur. He then failed, leaving many people the worse for his coming and the confidence of Decatur's 3,000 people in banks somewhat shaken.

Mr. James Millikin, having recently brought to Decatur about \$75,000 capital, was persuaded by many business men to open a new bank in the building where the Railroad bank had failed, and, notwithstanding the handicap of the location, the bank was a success.

The prudence and conservativeness which was the bank's policy, combined with the business sagacity of James Millikin, soon restored confidence in banking and for more than fifty years the Millikin bank has been the pride of Decatur and a bulwark of safety in financial circles.

Mr. Millikin's magnificent benefactions to Decatur came later than the time of which this story tells, but were foreshadowed by the thoughtful, painstaking, though willing, liberality of his gifts to every good cause in the days of old.



## CHAPTER IX.

### FIRST DECATUR BRICK

The scarcity of building material was a great handicap to the progress of Decatur. All efforts to make brick of clay in the vicinity had been abandoned. The old jail on the corner of Wood and Church streets was the only building standing in which Decatur brick had been used, and it was said that one could "pick any brick in that building to pieces with a darning needle." The court house, Stamper & Condell's store, the Macon and the Franklin street stores, with the Masonic hall, the Peddecord, Cassell and Dr. Read's residences were all built of brick from Edgar county, and hauled to Decatur in ox wagons.

When Mr. Martin located permanently in Decatur, in 1852, he was an enthusiastic believer in the future of the country, but decided that available building material was necessary to the fulfilment of his dreams. So he determined to test Decatur clay for brick making. He filled a large box with clay, dug on the corner of Broadway and Decatur streets, and took it to St. Louis as baggage on the stage coach. It was made into brick in St. Louis, brought back in Mr. Martin's trunk and put on exhibition in the window of E. O. Smith's store and labeled, "Brick made of Decatur clay."

The brick were tested in every imaginable way and pronounced "good brick." It seemed, however, that no one had enough faith in Decatur clay to invest money in its manufacture. Seeing that no one else was willing to risk in an investment of this kind, Mr. Martin went again to St. Louis and returned with an ox wagon and two two-horse wagons, loaded with men with their household goods, spades, moulds, etc., for brick making. Ben Metz, John Brandt and Frank and Henry Meyer were members of this group of immigrants. They were skilled brick makers and were soon convinced that brick making in Decatur could be made a profitable business. Mr. Martin capitalized the enterprise for



a while as a partner, but soon sold out to Ben Metz and also sold the ground between Broadway and Webster, from Decatur to Lawrence streets, for a brick yard.

All the clay from this land was dug out in a few years and the brick yards were moved further east. For many years this old brick yard was an "eye sore" to the neighborhood, having been denuded of clay and soil to a depth of several feet. One immense cottonwood tree stood until within a few years on a mound of earth on the lot on which Mr. Hoendorf has recently built a house. It was a land mark which old residents were sorry to see cut down, but in the march of improvement it had to give way to a house. This entire "hole in the ground," which for many years was thought to be of no value, is now occupied by comfortable homes.

The first brick yard was established on the lot at the intersection of Broadway and Gault streets, where the St. Louis brick makers made the first brick of Decatur clay. The bricks were "hand made." The clay was pulverized and mixed with spades. When it was properly tempered, it was cut to pieces of proper size, rolled in sand and placed in a sand mould, two bricks in each mould. These bricks, when turned out of the mould, had to receive careful attention until they were dry. They had to be turned over, stood on edge, taken in and out of the rain, etc. The men worked in gangs of four and each gang was expected to make and attend to 3,000 brick a day.

When the yard was moved to Broadway, a machine, whose motive power was an old blind horse, was substituted for spades in grinding the clay. Moulds for three bricks were used and "slop" brick were made—that is, brick with wet moulds instead of sand moulds.\*

Brick buildings soon began to be numerous. The first brick made was used in the foundation of the barn now standing on Johns' Hill, and the first house built of Decatur brick was the Johns residence.

\*I am indebted to Mr. Henry Meyer, who has lived for forty-five years on the corner of Decatur and Peake streets, for the above history of Decatur brick. Mr. Meyer joined his brother in the work at the time the yards were transferred to Broadway.

This house has the unique distinction of standing in the middle of a farm of 160 acres, located in the heart of a city of 35,000 people. A deed of trust, made in 1852, which has been pronounced invincible by the supreme court of Illinois, prevents it from being divided, sold or mortgaged. All the wood work in the building—joists, rafters, floors and finishings—are Macon county products. It has upon it today a tin roof, which in fifty-eight years has never required a patch. It has been frequently painted; some of the joints have been resoldered; the edges have twice been nailed down on new wood, but the entire roof is of the original tin.\*

There is in the garden of this house an asparagus bed, which for fifty-six years has never failed to yield an abundant crop, and has never had a new plant set in it. I think this and the Orlando Powers house, built the same year, are the only homes in Decatur, built before 1860, that are now occupied by the original owners or their descendants.

\*The wind storm of April 25, 1912, blew part of the roof off the east wing of the house.

## CHAPTER X.

### MANUFACTURES BEGIN

Very few of the infant industries and business enterprises of early Decatur survive. The old well known firms of Stamper & Condell, E. O. & T. O. Smith, C. H. Wingate, Jasper Peddecord, Henry Prather, who were the merchants and produce dealers of the early days, are all extinct. Franklin Priest and his brother, Valentine, were the originators of many varied and complex industrial enterprises, but they too have disappeared from the records of Decatur's prosperity.

The old Priest mill, which stood near the intersection of Decatur and Franklin streets, was for years the busiest place in the town. It was no unusual thing to see from a dozen to twenty wagons, loaded with corn and wheat, waiting their turn to have their grist ground. They came from a radius of fifty miles and waited patiently, sometimes for twenty-four hours, before they could be served. The grain was crushed and ground into flour and meal by old-fashioned mill stones that, like the mills of the gods, ground slowly. The mill received a certain per cent. of its products as toll and the farmers took home in the bags, in which they had brought the grain to the mill, their flour, midlings and bran.

Priest's mill was destroyed by fire some time in the sixties. In the vicinity of the old mill, a saw mill, cooper shop and a variety store, blacksmith shop and a tannery were located. Southwest of these there was a brick yard. These were all managed and capitalized by Franklin Priest and his brother, Valentine. Mr. Priest later built a hotel, ran an omnibus line and was four times mayor of Decatur. Had he lived in modern times, he would have been classed as one of the captains of industry.

Pork packing was at one time the most important factor in Decatur business. Henry Prather and J. J. Peddecord operated an extensive packing and rendering establishment, located about

where the M. & C. coal shaft now stands. William Martin also bought dressed hogs and had a packing house where the furniture factory was afterwards built. Mr. Martin introduced sugar cured hams and bacon and the reputation of "Martin's sugar cured hams" extended to New Orleans and New York. The demand was greater than the supply.

For many years pork and beef were the principal sources of revenue and medium of exchange in the community. Every householder had a pig pen and hogs were the street scavengers. Central park was a mass of hazel bushes and the town hogs fared well on the free mast. It cost more than it was worth to ship corn to market in any other form than in pork and lard. Farmers bought their groceries and hardware and drygoods on credit and paid the bills once a year in pork, which was shipped by the packers to St. Louis and New Orleans or New York. The shipments were sometimes delayed by the ice in the Illinois river so that there would often be stored in the "Old Round Top" warehouse thousands of pounds of pork and hundreds of barrels of lard, awaiting shipment by wagon to Naples, thence by flatboats and barges down the Illinois and the Mississippi rivers, finding a market enroute at St. Louis or New Orleans, if not shipped by sailing vessels to New York. Merchandise imported into Decatur was usually paid for in the eastern market with meat instead of money.

The old "Round Top," which had formerly been the shelter for a grist mill, operated by horse power, stood on the northwest corner of South Main and Wood streets, and was used as a pork packing house by Prather and Peddecord.

The Mueller Manufacturing company is the only one of Decatur's present numerous factories that had its origin before the war. In 1857, Mr. Hieronymus Mueller opened a little gun shop on West Main street, where, through his inventive genius and untiring energy, he established a trade that now encircles the globe. He educated his six sons, each according to his own peculiar bent, to take some special position in his manufacturing enterprise, and today each of those sons occupies the position his father designed and trained him for, and by their united ability, integrity and industry are supplying the world with the products of their father's

genius. The story of his inventions of the "water main tapping machine" is so characteristic and so interesting that, though it is of later date than that of my story, I take the liberty of quoting it from the "Mueller Semi-Centennial Memorial:"

The building of the water works in 1870 afforded the first noteworthy opportunity for the expansion of the business and Mr. Mueller was quick to grasp and turn it to advantage. There had previously been no need of plumbing firms in this city but the establishment of the water works created the necessity which was met and the initial step taken leading to a manufacturing enterprise. It also was the doorway leading to the first important invention—the water main tapping machine.

Martin Forstmeier was mayor of the city and appointed Mr. Mueller as city tapper, the duties of which position consisted in making service connections with the street mains. The primitive method of making a tap was a repugnant and unmechanical operation objectionable to as finished a mechanic as Mr. Mueller. The hole was drilled until only a thin piece of iron remained to retain the water in the main and with a hammer a corporation cock was driven through. In most cases before this could be done a great deal of water had escaped. One day a workman had failed in inserting a corporation cock, Mr. Mueller himself went into the trench and by the time he had succeeded found himself engulfed to the neck in water. When he finally completed the work, he said, "This thing has got to stop."

From that moment until the tapping machine was a reality, his mind was in a state of unrest. He concentrated his inventive power upon the one idea to the extent that some intimate with him thought it would be his mental undoing. After weeks of study he leaped from his bed one night, exclaiming vehemently, "I have got it." The perplexing problem which had befogged his mind was suddenly solved and in an instant the principle stood out plainly. Unwilling to trust his memory, he seized a piece of paper and made a rough sketch of his plan. After that there never was a doubt as to the ultimate success of the tapper. The following day Mr. Mueller secured drafts of his plan and, step by step, the tapping machine was developed, crude at first it is true, but none the less effective. Improvements were made as shown necessary by actual service and it was not long before the demand for machines began. Other inventions in water works goods came more easily and rapidly.

Another of Mr. Mueller's inventions which is used the world over is the water pressure regulator, and the Mueller Manufacturing Company, with an annual output of about \$2,000,000 worth of manufactured goods, has branch offices and stores in almost every important city in the union, and ships goods every day to every civilized country in the world.

The Morehouse & Wells establishment, partly industrial and partly commercial, is the only other enterprise of any note that had its beginning before the war. In 1859, a hardware store and tin shop was opened by that firm on the same site that is now occupied by their magnificent wholesale and retail establishment.

## CHAPTER XI.

### INFLUENCE OF PIONEER TEACHERS

I do not think that Decatur ever suffered from that class of schoolmasters usually credited to pioneer communities—"men who were either too lazy or too 'onery' to do anything else." Governor Oglesby went to school to Lemuel Allen. Mrs. Lemuel Allen taught a school for girls. Captain J. S. Post taught school while he studied law. These were all people of refinement and fair education, who taught, more for the accommodation of their neighbors than for the money there was in it. But to Mrs. Almira A. Powers and her sister, Miss Maria Giles, is Decatur indebted for raising the standard of education above that of its day and generation.

When I came to Decatur, Miss Giles was teaching a class of eighteen young ladies in a building on Franklin street which is still standing. This school room was a near neighbor to the Macon House where I lived and my piano became a magnet that drew me into close intimacy with these girls and their teacher.

When Miss Giles was married to Henry Elliott, Mrs. Powers opened a school for children, both boys and girls, in her own home on the corner where the public library building was afterwards erected. She introduced many educational innovations, such as defining words when they were spelled and constructing sentences containing them, solving practical problems in arithmetic instead of simply learning the tables and ciphering sums in addition and subtraction and multiplication. She also introduced "moral suasion" instead of the rod, where she found it practical, though the rod still held its place in discipline.

Mrs. Powers taught in Decatur for seven years and many of our best men and women of today trace their first aspirations for higher education to her guiding hand. Robert Montgomery, Cyrus Imboden, W. C. Johns, Mrs. Vennigerholz, Mrs. Kanan and many other old citizens delight to recall their school days with



Mrs. Powers and attribute to her much of their success in life.

Mrs. Powers lived in Decatur more than fifty years and was always a leader in any good work that promised to promote the welfare of the city of her adoption. She was the first president of the Ladies' Library Association and took a prominent part in the transfer of the library to the city and the establishment of the public library that now stands on the site of her old home.

The wisdom of the fathers and the lack of wisdom in their descendants is illustrated by the early grants of public lands for educational purposes and their subsequent dissipation and waste, by later generations. On May 20, 1787, the Continental congress, in an act providing for the disposal of public lands in the great northwestern territory, reserved "640 acres in every township in that vast domain for the maintenance of public schools in that township," and later, the enabling act, which granted statehood to Illinois, provided that "thirty-six sections, or one entire township in the state should be reserved for the use of a seminary of learning in the state." A further provision of this act appropriated two-sixths of five per cent. of the net proceeds of the sale of public lands in the state for the "encouragement of learning," of which one-sixth part was to be "exclusively bestowed on a college or university."

At a very early date Dr. William S. Crissey, who owned a farm west of town, made a strenuous effort to secure the location of the proposed state college in Decatur. For that purpose he proposed to donate to the state "The Mound," afterward known as College Hill (on North street, now owned by Mrs. Silas Packard and Mrs. William H. Ennis). When he failed to secure the state institution, he bequeathed the square to the "Missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal church of Illinois." There was no such society and the property reverted to Dr. Crissey's heirs.

For many years College Hill was used as public property. The first companies enlisted for the civil war rendezvoused there and were organized and sworn in on College Hill. A tabernacle was once built there in which a Sunday school convention was held. It was the first play ground and for years the boys played "shinny"



on "the Mound." When the houses now standing were built the top of the hill was graded and its height greatly reduced.

The pioneers of Macon county did not hasten to take advantage of these "stupendous gifts to education." Twelve thousand one hundred and sixty acres of land were at their disposal, yet they had no free schools before 1855. A law was passed in 1849 which provided that the people of the state might vote on a tax to be levied for schools and at an election held in Decatur township, July, 1851, thirty votes were cast for and twelve against a levy of 10 cents on \$100 valuation for school purposes. This was the first school tax ever paid in the county but there is no record of how it was expended.

The state school law, passed in 1855, gave township trustees the power to levy taxes for schools and in April of that year, I. C. Pugh and William Crissey, trustees, gave public notice that they had required to be levied a school tax for 1855, the rate of three mills on each dollar of taxable property in the township. There was also notice in the same year of the imposition of a tax of 50 cents on the \$100 valuation for the purpose of building a school house, which was signed by Daniel Barnes, president and E. G. Falconer, clerk.

The first property purchased for a school house was the lot on which the E. A. Gastman school now stands, for which the trustees paid E. D. Carter \$800. A few months later, David Allen and Thomas Read deeded to the city of Decatur, "for educational purposes," the lot now occupied by the Citizens National bank, "for a consideration of five dollars." This lot, practically a donation, was sold for \$1,000 to the "Macon Lodge of Masons." The Masons built upon it a brick building which for many years figured in Decatur history. The lower floor of the building was rented to churches and schools and for public meetings and entertainments. The lodge room on the second floor was for months loaned to the Hospital Aid society for their weekly meetings. It was torn down about 1883 and replaced by the three story Hawthorn block, which was for years the handsomest building in Decatur. The Citizens Title & Trust building now occupies that corner.

In 1856, the directors, J. J. Peddecord, E. O. Smith and P. B. Shepherd, commenced the building of a brick school house on the lot previously purchased from E. D. Carter. Under date of February 25, 1856, David Welkin, of Bloomington, writes to the "Illinois Teacher," published in Peoria:

"A few days since I visited Decatur, a town of 2,500 inhabitants. They are making arrangements to put up a large brick building next summer for the use of a graded school. J. H. Remsburg and lady have charge of a flourishing institute, with 140 pupils, while the high school, with 180 pupils, is taught by John W. Coleman, assisted by his wife and Miss Ela. There is also a female seminary under the care of Mrs. A. A. Powers and a school taught by Miss Gillespie."

The new building was opened in the fall of 1857, with J. H. Remsburg, principal, D. L. Bunn and Miss Helen E. Parsons (Mrs. William Wells), 'assistants up stairs.'

On the 12th day of June, 1862, an election was held at which it was ordered that a "special levy of twenty-five cents on the hundred dollars should be made to buy a lot and build a school house in the third ward." A site was selected, the plans drawn and the contract for the building was let to Mills and Shockley, but on the 30th of July following, the directors voted "that in view of the present unsettled state of the country, it is ordered that the levy of tax for building a school house as authorized by vote, be postponed for the present year and the building of the house be suspended, until such time as it may be deemed more expedient to make the levy authorized." The directors, however, ordered the treasurer, John P. Miles, to procure a clear title to the lot contracted for, and he was "authorized to pay therefore one hundred and fifty dollars in currency," to procure which he was ordered to "sell coin belonging to the district to the best advantage and give the district credit with the premium." And the Wood street school lot was bought at \$75 gold value from Orlando Powers.

On the twelfth day of July, 1862, Enoch A. Gastman was elected principal of all the schools at a salary of \$80 currency for the school year of six months. At the election held in 1863, 129

votes were cast for increasing the school year to nine months. Six votes were against the proposition. In 1864, the electors voted again for or against a nine months school and 167 votes were cast for and twenty-seven against the proposition.

The following extract from a report on public schools, written by Mr. Gastman, explains why and how Decatur has a "Special Charter" for her schools.

About this time, it became evident to the directors that the powers which they were given by the state law for the management of the schools of a rural district were not sufficient to enable them to carry on efficiently the schools of a rapidly growing city. It was difficult often to purchase a desirable school site, because the owners were unwilling to have it publicly advertised that they would sell property to be used for a public school because it might injure the sale of other adjacent property. Another class of owners was anxious to have a school house erected near their additions because it would attract the attention of desirable purchasers to their lots. A public election gave such persons an excellent opportunity to work for their own private interests. Again, the directors had no power to borrow money and this made it very difficult to erect needed school buildings.

After a good deal of discussion and inquiry, it was decided to request the legislature to grant the district a special charter. The Honorable Newton Bateman, state superintendent, was asked to recommend a charter that was in satisfactory use in the state which the board might use as a model. He recommended the one granted to the Rock Island school district in 1857. It was carefully examined and such amendments made as would adapt it to the wants of this district.

The bill was introduced in the house of representatives by General Isaac C. Pugh, the member from this city. It passed through the legislature with very little opposition, and it was approved by Governor Oglesby, February 16, 1865.

This special charter places the Decatur school district outside the pale of the general school laws of the state. It transfers from the voters to a board of education elected by them the power to levy taxes, select sites and build school houses, and thus "takes the schools out of politics." It gives to this board of education almost autocratic power. The people elect one of the three members of this board every year and give these three persons entire control of the schools and, without any court of last resort, the power to assess and expend the school tax of the district. They receive no pay for their services, yet, though they have unlimited control of the school fund, I think there has never been the slightest suspicion of graft or misappropriation in the fifty-seven years of the history of the Decatur board of education.

I am an advocate of the centralization of power and responsibility in officers elected by the people and I think the history of

Decatur public schools demonstrates that "government by the people by a representative part of the people for the people" is in most instances for the benefit of the people. For example, if the location of the new high school had depended on the vote of the people, when would it have been built and how much wire pulling and graft would have been required to build it?

Though Mr. E. A. Gastman's forty-seven years of connection with the public schools of Decatur began only two years before the period at which this story is supposed to end, his life has been linked with the history of so many people that any history of Decatur without a mention of his name would be most incomplete. Mr. Gastman was superintendent of schools forty-five years and in that time affixed his signature to the diplomas of 1,478 graduates of the Decatur high school. He was largely instrumental in securing the enactment of the special charter which now governs our schools. He also instituted many measures of great and permanent benefit to our schools.

The best years of his life were given to Decatur and his life ended when he had completed his work. He died on the third day of August, 1907, loved and honored by thousands of Decatur citizens.

## PART TWO—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"A blend of mirth and sadness, smiles and tears,  
A quaint knight errant of the Pioneers.  
A homely hero born of star and sod,  
A Peasant Prince, a Masterpiece of God."



### CHAPTER I.

#### FIRST MEETING IN 1850.

There are three distinct phases in which history must view Abraham Lincoln.

First, as a man of common mold, genial, kindly and ambitious.

Second, as the bearer of a Nation's Cross, misunderstood, distrusted, ridiculed and maligned. A man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

The third phase was not till after death had raised him through victory to his apotheosis, "A Masterpiece of God."

It is sixty-two years since I first met Mr. Lincoln, at that time a semi-obscure lawyer and politician, nowhere towering above his fellows except in stature. He had the local status of an honest, kind, genial man, too honest, too kind, too genial ever to become a success in the world. His personal appearance and dress were not sufficiently marked to be remembered, yet I think no man ever knew him and forgot him. In the light of today, when "results have thrown the mantle of greatness around Mr. Lincoln in such fashion that all the rugged outlines of his human personality are in danger of being lost," it will be a difficult task to recall the memory the man of common mold, the Lincoln whom I personally knew.

Biographies and histories that I have consulted give, what to

me is, a distorted view of his personality and his character. Some writers in an effort to "reconcile the hardships of his early life, his lack of education and refined social environment, with an understanding of his literary style," have made of his early life almost a fairy tale. Others, with a well meaning purpose to emphasize his rise from low estate to the pinnacle of Fame, have depicted him as an awkward country bumpkin without dignity or good manners. In biographies, platform eulogies and in novels, he is generally represented in the guise of either a hero or a boor. Winston Churchill in "The Crisis" has made an effort to reconcile the two, and has created a kind of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde nondescript, painfully unlike the real Mr. Lincoln.

There was undoubtedly a time when Mr. Lincoln split rails and plowed with oxen in Macon county, and there was a time when he practiced law in the old log court house. These events the Daughters of the American Revolution have commemorated, and their historian will recount the story. I would like to antedate my own recollections with a little story for which I am indebted to Mrs. Sarah Powers Durfee. It was one of the favorite stories of Mrs. Almira A. Powers, Mrs. Durfee's mother. The incident occurred before Mrs. Powers came to Decatur but was told her by Mrs. Landy Harrell, the "landlady," who heard the speech.

LINCOLN'S FIRST POLITICAL SPEECH AS TOLD BY  
MRS. SARAH POWERS DURFEE

During the few years that Abraham Lincoln lived in and near Decatur, he worked a short time for a man by the name of Shepherd, who owned a farm west of what is now Church street, and north of what is West Main street, then called the "Springfield road."

Decatur was a small village. In the survey of the village a square was laid off at an intersection of North and South Main and East and West Main streets.

On this square, first called "the square," later, "hay market," then when the new square was mapped, "the old square," and last being suitably named "Lincoln square," for it was here, in front of where Central block now is, that Abraham Lincoln made his first political speech. At the southeast corner of this square stood the log court house, and later the brick one, we many of us remember.

Where Central block now stands, there was a two-story frame building used for a tavern. In later years it was used as a general merchandise store by S. K. Thompson. This building had a long veranda across the south front in front of which were several forest trees. One of them had blown over, leaving a very splintery stump.



One day Abraham Lincoln was plowing in the field with a yoke of oxen. He heard cheering upon "the square," so turned his oxen into a corner, vaulted the fence, and went to see what was "going on."

The landlady, who was the eye-witness, was sitting on the veranda listening to a speech being made by a candidate for some Democratic office (Macon county was at that time Democratic). The speaker stood in a wagon, pleasing his hearers with his remarks about his political opponents, the "Old Line Whigs."

Lincoln had not studied law but was reading as he found time and books, and had accepted the "Old Line Whig" party as his choice.

He was described as follows: Very tall and thin; wore a "hickory" shirt with collar of same, turned back at his throat; a broad brimmed straw hat with a piece fringed out at one side and a black string tied around the crown to make it fit the head, and very tight tow-linen pants, much above his bare feet and ankles.

He listened until the speaker had finished, and felt so deeply the attack upon his party that he jumped upon the "splintery" stump and made such refutations of the charges that the hearers cheered him very lustily for his earnestness and pluck. The only evidence of his uncomfortable-ness was that he kept shifting his position to ease his feet.

It is notable that this same square now bears his name.



## CHAPTER II.

### A REAL GENTLEMAN.

When I first knew Mr. Lincoln, he was forty years old; had been a member of the state legislature and of congress; had traveled the circuit with men of culture and refinement; had met great statesmen and elegant gentlemen; and the ungainliness of the pioneer, if he ever had it, had worn off and his manner was that of a gentleman of the old school, unaffected, unostentatious, who "arose at once when a lady entered the room, and whose courtly manners would put to shame the easy going indifference to etiquette which marks the Twentieth century gentleman."

His dress, like his manner, was suited to the occasion, but was evidently a subject to which he gave little thought. It was certainly unmarked by any notable peculiarity. It was the fashion of the day for men to wear large shawls and Mr. Lincoln's shawl, very large, very soft and very fine, is the only article of his dress that has left the faintest impression on my memory. He wore it folded lengthwise (three and one-half yards long) in scarf fashion over his shoulders, caught together under the chin with an immense safety pin. One end of the shawl was thrown across his breast and over the shoulder, as he walked up the steps of the Macon House one day in December, 1849.

Court was in session in Decatur, Judge David Davis presiding. The hotel where I was living temporarily, was kept by David Krone and his good lady, whose popularity extended over the fourteen counties of the Eighth judicial district.

Court week was always anticipated with great interest by the people of the county seat. It was customary for the entire bar of the district to follow the court from county to county, every man either seeking new business, or as counsel in cases already on the

docket. The date of their arrival at any particular county seat could not be definitely fixed, as the judge held court at his pleasure, usually trying to finish all the business ahead before he migrated to the next station.

He was followed by a curious crowd. Lawyers, clients, witnesses, itinerant peddlers, showmen and gamblers filled the towns to overflowing. It was no unusual thing for men, who had no business in the court, to follow from town to town merely seeking entertainment. Social events of any moment were wont to be arranged for court week, as the harvest time, when strangers could be taken in. Taverns were crowded and the hospitality of the people was taxed to the utmost limit.

To the men of the town, who always crowded the court house, the examination of witnesses and the speeches of the lawyers furnished an intellectual treat, for there were giants at that bar. "There was David Davis, the companionable judge, who knew the law and who loved a laugh. And there were Stephen Logan the scholarly, and Stuart the shrewd and kindly, Swett the clever, and Browning the handsome, and Lamon the amusing, and Weldon and Gridley and Parks and Harmon and Ficklin and Linder and Whitney and Oliver L. Davis, and the best beloved Abraham Lincoln."\* Some of them traveled to only two or three counties, but Judge Davis, Mr. Lincoln and Leonard Swett went the whole circuit; Davis because he had to, Lincoln because he loved it and Swett because he loved their company.

The Macon House was an oasis in the wilderness of miserable inns at which they were usually compelled to "put up." In Decatur they found clean beds, good bread and an abundance of the good things of the season, administered by a genial landlady who greeted them all as friends.

It was in court week that my piano, after a long journey by steamer down the Ohio and up the Wabash to Crawfordsville, Ind., and thence by wagon, arrived in Decatur. The wagon was backed up to the steps at the front door of the Macon House and the question of how to unload it and get it into the house was a puzzling one. Not a man except the landlord was to be found,

\*Quoted from an address read before the American Bar association at Chattanooga, Sept. 1, 1910, by Charles W. Moore, of Indianapolis.

but he soon solved the problem. "Court will soon adjourn and there will be plenty of men," and almost as he spoke the crowd began to appear. They gathered curiously around the wagon that blocked the entrance. Landlord Krone explained:

"There is a piano in that box that this woman here wants some one to help unload. Who will lend a hand?"

A tall gentleman stepped forward and, throwing off a big gray Scotch shawl, exclaimed, "Come on Swett, you are the next biggest man."

That was my first meeting with Abraham Lincoln.

After a few moments consultation with the driver of the wagon, Mr. Lincoln went into the basement where Mr. Krone had a carpenter shop, and returned with two heavy timbers across his shoulders. With them he established communication between the wagon and the front door steps. The piano was unloaded with the assistance of Mr. Linder and Mr. Swett, amid jokes and jeers galore, most of the jeers coming from little Judge Logan.

Before the legs had been screwed into place, dinner was announced, and the men hurried to the back porch where two tin wash basins, a long roller towel and a coarse comb, fastened to the wall by a long string, afforded toilet accommodations for all guests. When dinner was served, "Mother Krone" placed a roast of beef in front of Dr. Trowbridge to be carved and exclaimed: "Men, if you can't get your teeth through this beef you will have to fall back on the sausage. I agreed to try roasting it without parboiling it, and I am afraid it will be tougher than it was yesterday, and that was bad enough."

The beef, however, proved to be tender and juicy and was highly praised by the guests. I recall this incident because Mr. Lincoln once reminded me of it, saying that "that was the time he learned that roast beef ought not to be boiled."

After dinner, Mr. Lincoln superintended the setting up of the piano, even to seeing that it stood squarely in the center of the wall space allotted it, and then received my thanks with a polite bow and asked: "Are you expecting to follow the court and give concerts?" The immense relief expressed on his countenance,

when he was assured that he would not be called upon to repeat the performance, was very laughable.

"Then may we have one tune before we go?" he asked, and I played "Rosin the Bow," with variations.

Some one shouted, "Come on boys, the judge will be waiting," and after I had assured them that if they desired it, I would give my "first and only concert on this circuit" when they returned to the hotel in the evening, the crowd dispersed.

Here I wish to note that in the crowd that had assembled to watch the unloading of the piano, the members of the bar, Mr Lincoln's friends and equals, always addressed him as "Mr. Lincoln," while to the rabble and hangers-on he was often "Abe."

The piano was a "Gilbert," made in Boston, and its fame extended far and wide. It was visited by people from all over the state, stage coach passengers frequently "holding the stage" while they "went down to the other tavern (the Harrell House was the stage office) to see and hear the novel instrument.

That evening a notable crowd assembled in the parlor of the Macon House. Judge Davis, who did not "put up" with Landlord Krone but was the guest of Mrs. A. A. Powers, came in after supper; and practically all of the bar of the Eighth judicial district was present at what I suppose we would now call a recital. I found that Mr. Charles Brown, a wealthy land owner and stock dealer of McLean county, not only sang but played a little and I called on him for assistance.

The program, as I remember it, will illustrate the style of music in vogue at that period.

For show pieces, I played the "Battle of Prague" and the "Carnival of Venice," then followed with "Washington's March." "Come Haste to the Wedding" and "Woodup Quick Step" to convince the audience that I "did know a tune" or two. For tragedy, I sang Henry Russel's "Maniac" and "The Ship on Fire," and then made "their blood run cold" with the wild wail of the "Irish Mother's Lament." For comic, we sang "The Widdy McGee" and "I Won't Be a Nun," topping off with "Old Dan Tucker," "Lucy Long" and "Jim Crow," the crowd joining in the chorus. These were followed by more serious music. Mr. Brown and Mr.

Swett joined me in the duet "Moonlight, Music, Love and Flowers," "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," "Pilgrim Fathers," "Bonaparte's Grave" and "Kathleen Mavourneen." Each and all met with applause.

As a finale, I sang "He Doeth All Things Well" after which Mr. Lincoln, in a very grave manner, thanked me for the evening's entertainment, and said: "Don't let us spoil that song by any other music tonight." Many times afterwards I sang that song for Mr. Lincoln and for Governor Oglesby, with whom it was also a favorite.

## CHAPTER III.

### A GUEST IN THE HOME.

I once heard Mr. Lincoln make a speech, and only once, and I cannot recall my impression of that speech or even the particular phase of the political situation upon which he spoke. A largely attended Republican meeting was held in the woods, just east of the Central Railroad and south of William street. I can remember the fiery eloquence of Owen Lovejoy and the sarcastic wit of "Long John" Wentworth, but Mr. Lincoln's speech seems to have left no impression.

We had as guests at dinner that day the gentlemen who were to speak in the afternoon, and while the others drew together to discuss the news of the day, Mr. Lincoln took my little Fanny on his knee, put one arm around Corwin and told them stories for half an hour. That was his way of resting. His fondness for children and their love for him were always in evidence. I think he never passed a child without a smile and a touch that seemed a benediction.

Twice, before this last visit, we had entertained Mr. Lincoln in our home on the farm. One of these visits is made memorable by the fact that on that day Mr. Lincoln had been the prosecuting attorney in a case in court in which Dr. Johns was accused of assault and battery with intent to kill. The story of that trial is so illustrative of the spirit of the time that I think it worth while the telling.

We had brought with us from Cincinnati, Alice, a girl about fifteen years old, as nurse for our children. The position and status of this girl, "who did not come to the table," was the subject of a great deal of conjecture and curiosity in the neighborhood. There had "squatted in the timber," about a quarter of a mile from our home, a typical pioneer from North Carolina. He with his wife, one daughter and eight sons, occupied a log cabin with one room and a loft and lived by hunting and fishing. The



oldest boy was about eighteen. No member of the family could read or write, but the old man and one of the boys could play the violin. Alice, in her walks with the children, had formed the acquaintance of the "See boys," and had frequently visited their cabin "unbeknownst to her mistress." One night she clandestinely went to a dance with Joe See, and at daylight, not having returned home, Dr. Johns went to seek her and found her at the See cabin. He ordered her to return home and she refused. She "was not his slave," he had "no right to order her." Mr. See was going to take her to Monticello that morning and "get her set free."

The united See family was more than "the doctor cared to tackle" alone, so he came home and reported that the old man, with Alice in the wagon, had started to Monticello. They were obliged to pass through a dense grove of trees and brush where the cleared road was very narrow, and there Dr. Johns and two of his men waylaid them. At the proper moment Frank Huston, with a rifle in his hand, stepped out of the woods and halted the wagon. Dr. Johns took hold of the girl and while trying to forcibly lift her to the ground, was struck on the head with an empty whiskey jug. The fray ended when Alice ran home and, "screaming like a wildcat," threw herself into my arms. Old man See, after breaking a chair over the head of Alva Caldwell, started his horses on a run and drove bare headed into Monticello, where he secured a warrant for the arrest of H. C. Johns on two charges, one of assault and battery and one for "illegally holding a girl in involuntary servitude."

That afternoon the doctor submitted to an arrest and taking Alice with him, went to Monticello, where a justice of the peace held him over to the circuit court, but admitted him to bail, William Piatt and Ezra Marquiss going on his bond. On the second charge the justice decided that the girl was free and that "H. C. Johns had no legal right to control her," whereupon Dr. Johns refused to take her home and demanded that the justice appoint a legal guardian who should take care of her till her mother in Cincinnati could be sent for.

It was six months after this episode that Judge Davis con-



vened court in Monticello and appointed Abraham Lincoln as prosecuting attorney for the session. When the case against H. C. Johns was called, Frank Huston, one of the men who had assisted in the assault, was the only witness present, the See family having "pulled up stakes and gone west," and the girl taken home by her mother. Dr. Johns was fined one cent and costs.

Mr. Lincoln reminded Dr. Johns, following adjournment, that he had a "standing invitation to 'put up' with Mrs. Johns whenever court was held in Monticello." Judge Davis said at once that it would be cruel to leave him behind, and so I had the pleasure that night of entertaining a future president of the United States and a member of his cabinet, as well as a senator and judge of the supreme court.

I asked Mr. Lincoln for an explanation of the one cent fine and he answered: "Well, he was guilty of assault, wasn't he? And he did get battered, and—well we needed the costs."

## CHAPTER IV.

### POLITICS AND PRINCIPLES.

This visit of Judge Davis and Mr. Lincoln was not the impromptu affair that it seemed. It was purely and simply a matter of politics. Mr. Lincoln was a candidate for the United States senate and the political complexion of the next legislature was a matter of personal interest to him. They had come to ask Dr. Johns to allow himself to be announced as a Whig candidate for representative to the Nineteenth general assembly.

The political situation, national, state and legislative district by counties and precincts, was discussed until midnight and Dr. Johns consented to announce himself as a candidate for the legislature.

This was my first lesson in practical politics and I think that both Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Davis were somewhat surprised at my interest. From childhood, I had been a politician and pre-eminently a Whig. The speeches of Clay and Webster, protective tariff and national bank, were my favorite topics of conversation. I had been brought up to believe that slavery was a divine institution, sanctioned by the Bible and the constitution of the United States; that within its own sacred precincts, south of Mason's and Dixon's line, it must not be interfered with by anyone who claimed to be a patriot. I had supposed the slavery question finally settled by that greatest of Whigs, Henry Clay, and that the country had accepted as final the compromise advocated by him.

Even the most pro-slavery of modern Whigs believed that concessions to the slave power had reached its limit in the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, and that "north of thirty degrees, thirty minutes north latitude, slavery and involuntary servitude was forever prohibited." The platforms of both the great political parties were emphatic in their antagonism to the further agitation of the slavery question, and had declared the compromise measures of 1852 "final settlement of the dangerous ques-

tion." It was therefore somewhat startling to me to learn that the extension of slavery was being agitated with greater acrimony than ever before. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the admission of Kansas and Nebraska to the Union, under Mr. Douglas' new doctrine of squatter sovereignty, was stirring the nation to its core.

Mr. Lincoln had been out of politics for eight years and now entered the arena again, only because he believed there was a great principle at stake for which he was willing to give his life if necessary. He declared his firm conviction that the "question at issue is the nation, not slavery, but the establishment of a slave holding empire in the south which should embrace the entire northwest. Our fight from this time on is not against slavery but for the preservation of the Union, not to free the black man but to hold free territory for free white men."

Mr. Lincoln's manner was startling in its intensity. His attitude towards slavery was one of extreme repulsion. He declared: "A poisonous exotic has taken deep root in good soil, where it is crowding out every healthy growth. We can't go into our neighbor's field and dig it out, but we can and must keep it from spreading into clean soil which is the inheritance of the people." "I am not an abolitionist," he exclaimed. "God in his own good time will find a way to rid the nation of its curse, but emancipation is a grave question which Divine wisdom only can solve."

The Whig party had always been conservative and Mr. Lincoln believed that in the success of that party was the nation's salvation. He deprecated the violence of the Abolitionists and emphatically advised that the injection of that subject into the coming campaign should be carefully avoided. He felt sure that his party would stand by him in resisting further aggressions of the slave power, but as the Whigs of the district were almost all men of southern antecedents, who hated an Abolitionist with an intensity that is almost inconceivable at the present day, he thought it would be good politics to supersede the slavery question by one of more absorbing interest.

Locally, Know-Nothingism was the paramount issue. The district had always been Democratic but the natives of the west

hated the Irish almost as bitterly as they hated the "nigger," and the hope of the Whigs was in the division of the Democracy. The internal improvement scheme had flooded the state with foreign laborers, nine-tenths of whom had allied themselves with the Democratic party, and their vote at any election might control the political conditions.

A provision of the constitution of 1818 read, "In all elections, all white male inhabitants above the age of twenty-one years, having resided in the state six months, shall enjoy the right of an elector." This idea was exceedingly unpopular and resulted in the formation of the Know Nothing party whose platform was "America for Americans."

It was through these conferences and correspondence, incident to this campaign, that I learned to know and love Mr. Lincoln. I was first impressed with his thorough knowledge of men and then with his wonderful memory of the peculiarities of the individual. He had traveled the circuit so many years, when court week was every man's holiday, that he knew the people collectively and individually, and was prepared to diagnose the politics and prejudices of every man of any influence in every precinct, and to prescribe the special treatment for his particular case.

Yet in discussing the personnel of any individual, he judged sympathetically and justly. He was always able "to put himself in the place" of the man he judged and to take into consideration his environment, his heredity and his temptations.

Mr. Lincoln wrote many letters of advice and instruction regarding the conduct of that legislative campaign in which he showed remarkable insight into the impulses as well as the motives that may be used in influencing men. These letters were so intimate and so personal that he advised their destruction "as soon as read." If they could have been preserved, they might have been used as a valuable lesson in honest political tactics.

## CHAPTER V.

### FAILED OF ELECTION IN 1855.

I will give the story of how Mr. Lincoln failed to be elected to the senate of the United States by the Legislature of 1855, as I had prepared it to be read at the Lincoln Centennial at the James Millikin University. I was unable to tell the story on that occasion, and it yet remains

### A BIT OF UNWRITTEN HISTORY.

The Nineteenth general assembly of Illinois to which Dr. H. C. Johns of Piatt was elected as a Whig, convened in Springfield, January 1, 1855. The most important transaction of that assembly was the election of a United States Senator. The Kansas-Nebraska Bill was the main political issue of the day. Senator Douglas had espoused "Popular Sovereignty" and committed the Democratic party to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the "Abolition of the Mason and Dixon Line."

Mr. Lincoln, who was the Whig candidate for the senate, fearlessly took the stump in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska legislation and, in October, met Senator Douglas in joint discussion at Springfield, and followed him at numerous other points. The political situation at that time was a complicated one. Know-Nothingism, or the anti-Irish sentiment, was strong in Illinois as is the anti-Japanese feeling of today, in California, and was an important factor in the election of the members of the legislature. In central and southern Illinois, to be called an Abolitionist was quite as bad as to be called a thief.

To hold Whigs with southern sympathies to party allegiance, to check the violence of the Abolitionists, to alienate Know-Nothings from the Democratic party, whose senatorial candidate, General Shields, was an Irishman, was the difficult task set by Mr. Lincoln for his supporters. Throughout the pre-election campaign, the task of adapting the issues to the location was di-

rected by Mr. Lincoln's shrewd hand. Every section of the state and, in some instances, even precinct divisions, had to be diplomatically managed. Could the voluminous correspondence required by that generalship have been preserved, it would have proved a lesson in political tactics.

A convention of "men of all parties opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska legislation," met in Springfield, October 3, 1854. Prominent Democrats such as Palmer, Cook and Judd, went to Springfield with the intention and expectation of assisting in the nomination of Mr. Lincoln as the Anti-Nebraska candidate for senator. Dr. Johns had letters from Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Palmer, Governor Koerner and others, all of whom believed that with careful management, the opposition to the Douglas program could be united.

Unfortunately, the rabid Abolitionists took possession of the convention and, by their violence, drove many conservative men from the support of Mr. Lincoln, who fearing the effect of this convocation, did not participate in the proceedings. Democrats, who were delegates to that convention, "bolted," held a separate convention and nominated Lyman Trumbull as "Anti-Nebraska Democratic candidate for the senate."

When the legislature met there was an undoubted Anti-Nebraska majority on joint ballot. (the new party had not yet been born and christened Republican). Mr. Lincoln was the Whig candidate but the Anti-Douglas Democrats had pledged themselves to vote to the end for Trumbull, while the Abolitionists, Know-Nothings and Whigs with southern sympathies, held the balance of power.

Mr. Lincoln's friends were anxious for an early date for the senatorial election, fearing that delay and debate would intensify the rancor of both parties against the Abolitionists, but the Democratic majority of the senate filibustered for delay.

February 8 was finally agreed upon. On the first ballot forty-five votes were cast for Mr. Lincoln, forty-one for General Shields, five for Mr. Trumbull, two for Mr. Koerner and one each for six other candidates, one member not voting. Six ballots followed quickly, Shields holding steadily forty-two votes,



while Lincoln fell to thirty-six. On the seventh ballot the Democrats changed to Governor Mattison, through whose personal popularity they hoped to win. The eighth and ninth ballots increased Mattison's vote to forty-seven, which was conceded to be his utmost strength. The opposition vote on these two ballots was cast wildly and with no other purpose than to obtain delay. It was near noon and a recess was taken till two o'clock. The Whigs were confident that during this recess enough of the scattering vote would be secured to elect Mr. Lincoln.

The five Democrats who had pledged themselves to "vote for Trumbull to the bitter end" were thought invulnerable, and without some of their votes Mattison could not be elected. The noon recess was spent in hard work by all of Mr. Lincoln's supporters and at one o'clock they were jubilant with the certainty of success.

As the wife of a member of the house and a decided Lincoln partisan, I had been an interested spectator of the proceedings. I went from the state house directly to my room which was separated from the adjoining parlor by closed folding doors. I was resting quietly on my bed, which stood against these doors, when three men entered the adjoining room. My attention was first attracted by hearing one of these men say, "They do not expect to elect him on the next ballot, but are sure to on the eleventh or twelfth unless we head them off."

Two of these men were evidently members of the legislature. Considerations, political and financial, which seemed to have been previously discussed, were merely alluded to, but the program of procedure was minutely arranged. One of these men, whose name came near the head of the roll call, was to "change his vote to Mattison after Allen and Baker had voted for Trumbull," and this was to be the signal for a stampede for Mattison. "Three more votes are secure and others will follow," they said. The roll call was then carefully gone over and the probable vote of each man noted and checked.

I listened intently, but was not able to fully grasp their scheme, though I did understand their conclusions. "Your votes will assure the election of Mattison on the next ballot, and I give

you my personal guarantee for the fulfillment of our contract," was the final sentence I heard as they left the room.

I hastened immediately to the state house, sent for Dr. Johns, told him the story, and was taken to a private room where I met Mr. Lincoln and repeated to him as nearly as I could the exact words of the interview I had overheard. I had either forgotten or had not heard the names of either of these men. Mr. Lincoln, who seemed almost stunned, walked the floor without a word of comment; then picked up a list of the members of the legislature, which was on a table in the room, and after scanning it carefully, said very sternly, "I don't think *he* will vote for Mattison"

A few gentlemen, one of whom I remember was John M. Palmer, were summoned in haste, and I was asked to repeat the story. It was evidently an unexpected blow and was received almost in silence. Mr. Lincoln rose from his seat, where he had seemed for a moment almost in a state of collapse, and said: "Gentlemen, Lyman Trumbull must be elected to the senate on the next ballot!"

The assembly had already convened and there was not a moment to be lost. Mr. Lincoln himself went down the aisles of the house and personally requested his adherents to vote for Mr. Trumbull on the next ballot, the result of which was fifty-one votes for Trumbull and forty-seven for Mattison. The unknown had evidently *not* voted for Mattison.

Mr. Lincoln's disappointment was evident, the greater because he had been assured that in addition to the forty-five votes he had received on the first ballot, four of the scattering vote had been secured for him, that Mattison's utmost strength was forty-seven, and that his friends were confident he would eventually receive the fifty-one votes necessary to an election. But with the disclosure of this new plot, immediate action was demanded and Mr. Lincoln decided, without hesitation or advice, to sacrifice personal ambition to the cause of freedom.

Thus did Fate once again, through bitter disappointment, reserve Lincoln for a greater destiny.

## CHAPTER VI.

### AT BIRTH OF REPUBLICAN PARTY.

The election of Mr. Trumbull proved to be the death blow of the Whig party in Illinois. The bloody fight for the admission of Kansas as a slave state had unified the anti-slavery sentiment. Opposition to squatter sovereignty and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had obliterated old party lines, but the new combination of Whigs, Democrats and Free Soilers, while acting in harmony, had no distinct organization or party name. In breaking away from old party affiliations, both Democrats and Whigs objected to the name of Free Soilers because of its taint of Abolitionism. Anti-Nebraska had by common acceptance been the cognomen of the new party. The name "Republican" had been suggested but had received no official endorsement.

The editors of Illinois opposed to the Anti-Nebraska Bill had called a meeting to be held in Decatur, February 22, for the purpose of making arrangements for the organization of the Anti-Nebraska forces in this state for the coming contest, and all editors favoring the movement were requested to forward a copy of their paper containing their approval to the "office of the Illinois State Chronicle, at Decatur." William J. Usrey was the editor of the Chronicle, and was made secretary of the convention. The call received the formal endorsement of twenty-five papers, a number of which had formerly been Democratic.

The convention met in the parlor of the Cassell House, (now St. Nicholas), and adopted a series of resolutions organizing a new party, "to be named the Republican party." They appointed a state central committee with authority to call a state convention. A banquet was given in the evening at which "the infant was christened," and Mr. Lincoln, who was an invited guest, "made the speech of the evening."

Decatur therefore proudly claims the honor of being the birth-place of the great Republican party. The Pittsburgh convention

effected a national organization on the same day, but the name was a Decatur product and Abraham Lincoln its sponsor.

Two years later the Republican party of Illinois chose Mr. Lincoln as their champion against Mr. Douglas in the great contest for the Illinois senatorship. It was a forlorn hope which was thus intrusted to his charge, but though his frank and almost radical utterances, in the series of historical debates with Mr. Douglas, insured his own defeat for the senate, he managed to compel his opponent to so discredit himself with the slavery propaganda of the south as to insure his defeat when a candidate for president.

Mr. Lincoln accepted his defeat as final, but after this most heart breaking of his disappointments he was able to say:

"I am glad I made the race and, though I now sink out of view, I believe I have made some marks which will tell for the cause of civil liberty long after I am gone." It was this spirit which in the end made his record, "a story of failures that succeeded."

## CHAPTER VII.

### IN DECATUR WIGWAM IN 1860.

The memorable Lincoln and Douglas debates had made it impossible for Mr. Lincoln to "sink out of view." The Republicans of Illinois were proud of his record and were determined "to do him honor." Early in 1860, he was mentioned for the presidency but was hardly considered a candidate. But for vice-president on a ticket headed by William H. Seward, he was prominent before the people. It was almost universally believed that the state convention of Illinois would present his name for that office to the National Convention in Chicago.

The state convention was booked for Decatur, May 6, 1860, and the question of what to do with it was a puzzling one. There was neither hall nor hotel room to accommodate the accredited delegates, much less the large crowd of prominent men who were expected guests. Committees were appointed to solve the problem.

To the people of Decatur, at that day, nothing was impossible and very soon arrangements were completed to adequately accommodate the crowd. The entertainment of all delegates was provided for by the hospitality of private citizens, leaving the hotels for the press and other visitors. A building to accommodate the convention had to be provided. It is described by the Decatur Herald, as follows:

D. C. Shockley was a contractor and builder and the Republicans of Decatur entrusted to him the erection of a structure for the convention. At that time the Roach building and the Stoner building on State street had not been built. These vacant lots, with State street, made ample ground, which was selected as the place. There were few lumber yards in Decatur then and lumber was hard to rent for such purposes. It cost too much to buy it. Enough lumber was secured, however, to build about sixteen or eighteen feet of the west end against the Washburn building. The roof was flat, sloping south with the surface of the ground. Richard J. Oglesby in some way secured a large tent fly belonging to some circus company. This was attached to the wooden part and stretched flat across to near the east building, supported by posts and stringers, and was roped down at the ends and sides.

This structure was called "The Wigwam."\* It was something over 100 feet east and west, fronting on Park street, and about seventy feet wide. The stand was on the south side and the roof was so low that the heads of men as tall as Lincoln, when on the platform, almost touched the canvass roof. The seats were constructed of plank, staked on edge with boards laid over them. While Mr. Shockley had charge of the building, M. E. Schroeder and many others still living here helped to do the work, charging nothing for their services.

This was the greatest convention ever held in any state. Abraham Lincoln was there. So was Palmer, Oglesby, Medill, Judd, Lovejoy, Wentworth, ready for the fray.

The principal business of the convention was the nomination of a candidate for governor, but presidential prospects and possibilities were the chief subjects of conversation. A surprise, however, was being prepared by a secret conclave under the guidance of Richard J. Oglesby.

To Oglesby, of Decatur, must be conceded the honor of *creating* the candidacy of Abraham Lincoln for president of the United States. He knew and honored and loved Mr. Lincoln, and believed from the bottom of his great heart that none of the other candidates were so eminently fitted for that high position as Abraham Lincoln. He had conceived the idea of presenting Lincoln as the representative candidate of free labor, the exponent of the possibilities for a poor man in a free state. Recalling the successful Log Cabin and Hard Cider campaign of 1840, he determined to find some one thing in Mr. Lincoln's unsuccessful career as a worker that could be made the emblem of that idea, and a catch word which would make enthusiastic the working people. One day he met John Hanks, whom he knew had worked with Lincoln on a farm years and years before, and asked him "what kind of work 'Abe' used to be good at."

"Well, not much of any kind but dreaming," was Hank's reply, "but he did help me split a lot of rails when we made the clearing twelve miles west of here."

The rest of the story I will give as it was related to J. McCan Davis, clerk of the supreme court of Illinois, by Mr. Oglesby himself:

"John," said I, "did you split rails down there with Old Abe?"

"Yes; every day," he replied.

\*In a room on the second floor of the brick building, which was used as the east wall of this Wigwam, the first post of the Grand Army of the Republic was organized on April 5, 1865.



"Do you suppose you could find any of them now?"

"Yes," he said. "The last time I was down there, ten years ago, there were plenty of them left."

"What are you going to do tomorrow?"

"Nothing."

"Then," said I, "come around and get in my buggy and we will drive down there."

So the next day we drove out to the old clearing. We turned in by the timber and John said:

"Dick, if I don't find any black-walnut rails, nor any honey-locust rails, I won't claim it's the fence Abe and I built."

Presently John said: "There's the fence!"

"But look at those great trees," said I.

"Certainly," he answered. "They have all grown up since."

John got out, I stayed in the buggy. John kneeled down and commenced chipping the rails of the old fence with a penknife. Soon he came back with black-walnut shavings and honey-locust shavings.

"There they are," said he, triumphantly holding out the shavings. "They are the identical rails we made."

Then I got out and made an examination of the fence. There were many black-walnut and honey-locust rails.

"John," said I, "where did you cut these rails?"

"I can take you to the stumps," he answered.

"We will go down there," said I.

We drove about a hundred yards.

"Now," said he, "look! There's a black-walnut stump; there's another—another—another. Here's where we cut the trees down and split the rails. Then we got a horse and wagon, hauled them in, and built the fence and the cabin."

We took two of the rails and tied them under the hind axle-tree of my new buggy, and started for town. People would occasionally pass and think something had broken. We let them think so, for we didn't wish to tell anybody just what we were doing. We kept right on until we got to my barn. There we hid the rails until the day of the convention.

Before the convention met, I talked with several Republicans about my plan, and we fixed it up that old John Hanks should take the rails into the convention. We made a banner, attached to a board across the top of the rails, with the inscription:

"Abraham Lincoln, The Railsplitter Candidate, for President in 1860. Two rails from a lot of 3,000 made in 1830 by John Hanks and Abe Lincoln."

After the convention got under way, I arose and announced that an old Democrat desired to make a contribution to the convention. The proceedings stopped, and all was expectancy and excitement. Then in walked old John with the banner on the rails.

From that time forward the rails were ever present in the campaign.

The Seward boom was dead. "Dick" Oglesby and old John Hanks and two fence rails had killed it.

John M. Palmer was soon on his feet with a resolution declaring that "Abraham Lincoln is the first choice of the Republican party of Illinois for the presidency," and instructing "the delegates to the Chicago convention to use all honorable means to se-

cure the nomination and to cast the vote of the state as a unit for him."

Thomas J. Turner, of Freeport, who had served in Congress with Lincoln in 1847-8, was there as a champion of Seward, and he bitterly attacked the resolution. Palmer replied in a speech of tremendous force, and the resolution was adopted amid great applause.

The enthusiasm with which this rail framed banner was received by the convention is unrivaled in history, unless we except the reception of Mr. Lincoln's nomination at Chicago a few weeks later. The roof was literally cheered off the building, hats and canes and books and papers were tossed aloft, as men jumped and screamed and howled, until part of the awning over the platform fell on their heads. When the enthusiasm finally subsided, the Wigwam was almost a wreck.

Six delegates from Stevenson county, who were our guests, were at breakfast firmly for Seward and Lincoln, but at dinner they were for "Lincoln—Lincoln and anybody," but Lincoln first.

It was a complete surprise to Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Lowber Burrows, who was present, thus described the scene:

Yes, I was present when Johnny Hanks carried that banner into the convention, and the whole crowd went wild. The members were simply frantic with surprise and delight. Lincoln was wildly called for. You know, he could not be found when they wanted him. A committee hunted around and finally found him asleep in the back room of his friend, Jim Peake's jewelry store. Lincoln had wandered into the store, seeking for a few minutes rest and quiet, and seeing the couch, threw himself on it and soon fell asleep.

He was roused and rushed to the platform of the convention through a back entrance. He knew nothing of the plot and, when confronted with the banner, stood for a few minutes simply dazed with astonishment. When told that these were rails that he had split, he said: "Gentlemen, John and I did split some rails down there, and if these are not the identical rails, we certainly made some quite as good."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EXCITING JOURNEY IN SOUTH.

Mr. Oglesby's idea was adopted by the north with enthusiasm, but the slave holding aristocracy of the south scornfully repudiated the Railsplitter. "The man who would do the work that a 'nigger' could do as well," was not fit for a white man's society, much less for his vote. Mr. Lincoln's antecedents and personality were made to supersede political questions and the issue was seemingly, "Poor White trash or a gentleman." Through ridicule and caricature, the very name of Lincoln was made an offense to decency. To mention him was like casting a fire brand into a powder magazine.

In October, 1860, Dr. Johns was on his way by rail to New Orleans on a business trip. Somewhere in Alabama a crowd of men, who had been attending a political meeting, boarded the train, and soon proposed a straw vote for president. Ballots were distributed and Dr. Johns voted for Abraham Lincoln, folded his ballot and threw it into the hat without making any comment. When the votes were counted it was announced that Bell had a majority, Breckenridge followed a close second, with four votes for Douglas and one for Lincoln. Some ruffian, standing in the aisle, yelled out, "Where's the d——d Yankee that voted for that beast?" "Let's put him off!" "Who is he?" "Where is he?" was the immediate cry from different quarters of the car.

A self constituted committee started a search with oaths and threats of death to the Abolitionist. Dr. Johns sat next the window, and beside him a big Kentuckian who had voted for Bell. "Don't stir and don't open your mouth," whispered his seat mate, laying his hand heavily on the Doctor's knee. Then turning to the crowd, he yelled, "Boys, he is in the other car; try there."

The excitement continued for ten minutes, or until the train reached the station where the majority of the passengers got off.

After quiet was restored, the Kentuckian whispered, "You made a narrow escape."

One month later the Republican party had triumphed at the polls, Abraham Lincoln had been elected president of the United States, and secession was rampant. Every possible means of "firing the Southern Heart" was resorted to. Persistent and determined vilification of Mr. Lincoln was incited and encouraged by the secession leaders, and his personality was made the dominant issue.

This particular phase of the situation is indelibly impressed on my memory by the exciting incidents of a trip I made to New Orleans in January, 1861.

The winter had been a gloomy one. The excitement preceding the memorable political campaign of 1860 and the reaction after the first jollification over Republican success had been followed by a period of extreme depression. State after state was seceding from the Union and rumors were rife that the navigation of the Mississippi River was no longer feasible. The Cairo firm of Halliday Brothers, of which William Martin and William Ennis, of Decatur, were members, had accumulated a big boat load of corn, intended for the New Orleans market and they were determined to risk getting it to its destination. Captain Halliday invited me to join his wife and a party of Louisville Ladies who, with my father, were to be his guests on the trip, and I joyfully accepted. Mr. Martin and Mr. Ennis were not so sanguine of the success of the venture and sold out their interests in the cargo the morning we left Cairo, and Mr. Martin did not join the party.

The ladies of our party and the officers of the boat had the ladies' salon to themselves, but there was a full complement of passengers both in the cabin and below deck, mostly men of the south who were returning to their homes after making a final settlement of their business affairs in the north.

We had not been long aboard before it became a matter of notoriety that I knew and was a friend of Mr. Lincoln, who was then en route to Washington for his inauguration. My personal acquaintance with him aroused the curiosity and soon developed the hostile attitude towards him of my fellow passengers. I was

the only "Black" Republican on board and most of my time was taken up in discussing, defending and describing the man who for the next four years was to be the head of the nation. His personal appearance, outre manners and reputed ignorance were invariably quoted as the chief ground of complaint.

The states were seceding because they would not be ruled by poor white trash, a rail splitter, a country bumpkin, and last and vilest epithet of all, an Abolitionist. I asked one gentleman if he had ever read any of Mr. Lincoln's speeches. "No I wouldn't touch them with the tongs!" he declared. When I declared him a gentleman, fit for any society in the land, a lady said in an aside, "Yes, in any barroom!"

When I quoted Lincoln's speeches to prove that he was not an Abolitionist, they proclaimed him a hypocrite. When I said that I never thought of him as an unusually homely man, and that he dressed as well as the average man on that boat, I was answered by, "Do you mean the average deck hand?" When I asserted that he was one of the most interesting men and best talkers I had ever met, one man bowed formally and said, "I would not have supposed that *you* were interested in ribald stories!" Oh! how my blood boiled!

When we arrived at Memphis, our captain was officially informed that he would not be allowed to pass Vicksburg without reporting to the custom officers of the "Sovereign State of Mississippi," and that his cargo was liable to confiscation. Memphis dealers offered to buy him out and allow him to return to Cairo unmolested. Captain Halliday, however, decided that "the river was wide, the water high, Louisiana was yet in the union," and he would "risk passing Vicksburg on the Louisiana side," which he did; but not without a gun being fired across the bow of the boat at Vicksburg as a signal to "round to."

We found New Orleans panic stricken. The convention that seceded Louisiana was holding exciting sessions behind closed doors. There were rumors that a majority for secession could not be secured. Threats of violence against the Unionists were heard every where.

Merchants were selling "all goods not staple" for any price



that a buyer would offer in gold. Silks, laces and fancy goods were almost given away. The impression was universal that the Mississippi river would be the first bone of contention in the coming war and that New Orleans was doomed. Our cargo of corn was, without delay, sold for gold at a profit that laid the foundation for the future success and great wealth of the Halliday Brothers. As fast as the corn could be transferred to barges and flat boats, it was "shipped to the interior," where it would be safe, and I have no doubt was purchased by the Confederate government.

My Louisville friends made very profitable investments in silks, laces and jewelry, the captain furnishing us gold for our shopping. We soon found that if we bought one article, we must buy others to equal the value of the coin we offered in payment, for they would not give us change in coin. While my friends shopped, I always succeeded in making it known that I was from the vicinity of Springfield, Illinois, and knew Mr. Lincoln. The result was always interesting, sometimes startling, frequently laughable, and once or twice a spice of danger was added for variety. The salesmen in the stores were invariably young fire-eaters, who boasted that they were drilling every night, "though they had little hope of a fight, for the Yankees would never give them a chance." One young fellow had "promised his sweetheart a piece of Lincoln's hide for a purse," saying, "Monkey skin makes excellent leather, you know." Another, upon receiving from me five dollars in gold for sixteen yards of silk, with ten yards of Spanish lace for trimming, promised us his "personal protection when we'uns are marching through Illinois," if we would leave him our names and addresses.

One of the Louisville ladies, becoming a little frightened at the fierce bravado of a young drug clerk, said, "Oh! I am not from Illinois; Kentucky is my home!"

"D——n Kentucky! that's worse than Illinois! snapped the clerk. "I wouldn't give that (snapping his fingers) for a milk sop! They are worse than Abolitionists!"

I was asked in good faith by apparently intelligent men if "Lincoln could read." "Does he always go barefooted?" "Has he



a negro wife?" "Does he look like a babboon?" I was told by a middle-aged merchant that "Louisiana would not have seceded if the north had elected a gentleman for president, but we can't stand Lincoln, a mere laborer who don't know his letters; that is a d——d disgrace."

As a rule the business men were grave and apprehensive, but acknowledged that they were powerless. Fear of some dread calamity seemed to have paralyzed their wills. One of the proprietors of a large dry goods store invited me into his private office, "where he dared speak his mind," and told me of a visit he had made to Mr. Lincoln's home just after the election.

"I went," said he, "determined to know the truth about the man and his purposes, and, would to God I could make these people see him as I saw him. I am convinced that under no circumstances will Lincoln make any aggressive movement towards the south. He is fair and honest and while he intends to preserve the Union, he will never countenance interference with the constitutional rights of any state. Mr. Lincoln's parting words to me were: "You may assure your people that unless the south herself strikes a blow at the Union, all her institutions will be as safe under my administration, as under Mr. Buchanan's."

"I dared after I came home to say aloud that Mr. Lincoln is a gentleman and a patriot and, in consequence, my life is in danger every hour, and I have been obliged to hire a guard to watch my store day and night to keep my own clerks from setting it afire."

We were advertised to leave New Orleans for "Baton Rouge, Memphis and Cairo," at noon on the 27th day of January. Passengers and freight were booked for all these stations. About 10 o'clock the Captain reported that the boat was to be held till four to take on about fifty members of the convention and legislature, who wanted to go to Baton Rouge that night. There had been vague rumors all day that a mob was organized, sworn "never to let the gold that the corn was sold for leave the levee," and a guard of uniformed police had been granted Captain Halliday by the mayor of New Orleans. Canvas bags, supposedly holding the gold, had early in the day been conveyed under guard from

the Bank of New Orleans to the safe of the steamboat where the servants, officers and some of the deck hands had seen them deposited.

None of the lady passengers had been allowed to leave the boat that day. As nearly out of sight as possible, we sat on the guards, listening to the music of the bands and the roar of cannon that announced the lowering of the flag of the Union and the raising of the Confederate flag over the mint and other public buildings, and watching the surging crowd of people on the levee.

A little after four o'clock, the governor of the state, two ambassadors from the Confederate congress, a number of members of the convention and of the legislature marched to the landing, accompanied by two bands of music and escorted by the Louisiana Zouaves. As they boarded the boat they were saluted with a salvo of guns. Steam was up and the boat pulled out immediately, and as she swung into the stream a sigh of relief and thankfulness went up from every heart.

Supper was served the lady passengers in the ladies' cabin, behind closely drawn curtains. In the cabin beyond, a drunken orgy was kept up until late in the evening. No one pretended to go to bed as the Baton Rouge contingent expected to land before morning, but gradually the confusion subsided. The riotous element was evidently "making a night of it" at the lower end of the boat near the bar. Gradually there had gathered at the table near our drawn curtains a number of gentlemen, who were evidently not of the common herd, and who desired to escape the revel lower down. All the ladies excepting myself had gone to their state rooms, "frightened and tired to death," and the lights in our cabin were put out. The chambermaid whispered to me:

"Missy, if you want to see the 'quality,' I'll fix your chair right here in this corner where you can peek through the crack."

I took the suggestion and with my shoulder almost touching the back of a man they called "General," I sat almost breathless and listened for two hours. The events of that night are burned into my brain and I can almost hear again the words that made my blood boil with indignation, though I was shivering with fear. First I heard a pleasant voice say, "Well, now it's done! We're

out of the United States and we're in the Confederacy. What next?"

A voice at the lower end of the table thundered, "War!"

"Bosh!" said another man. "There's no danger of war! Lincoln is crawling already. Talks about guaranteeing us all our rights under the constitution; non-interference, and such rot!"

"They're all a set of cringing cowards! If there was money in it, mebbe they'd fight."

"They wouldn't fight if they could and they couldn't if they would, for Jeff Davis and Floyd have seen to it that we have all the guns and all the money."

"Granting that we have, what else have we?" hissed the first speaker. "We have the niggers—we have them just where the cowards want them! Every nigger with a coal of fire between two chips is worth a hundred guns!"

There was dead silence for a minute and then some one said: "I ain't afraid to trust my family to my niggers. They'd fight to the death for 'Ole Missy.'"

"Oh, yes! you Virginians have played it smart! You've shipped all your firebrands down to the cotton fields."

"We're *none* of us afraid of our house servants, but my God! just look at the cattle on the plantations! Let me tell you, this don't mean *war*,—it means ——," and he whispered with a fearful hiss, "In-sur-rection!"

For two long hours I sat almost breathless and listened. Every sentence impressed itself on my brain forever, making that night the most memorable of my life.

The probabilities and possibilities of war were discussed from every point of view. A few men thought war inevitable, but "it would not last long." There would be "no bloodshed on southern soil." "No Yankee army would ever cross the border." "We are ready, we have been getting ready for years." "A hundred thousand men are ready to take Washington and overrun the northern states in less than a month." "They will get all the fighting they want at home," and similar bravado.

Suddenly and very impressively, a man who had scarcely spoken before, leaned forward on the table and said: "Gentle-

men, there will be no war. Lincoln will not get as far as Washington; he will never be inaugurated. Washington City will be ours in less than a month. The mine is laid and the coup d'etat is planned. When Washington is ours, Virginia and Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri will fall into line. Illinois is ready too, and the Mississippi valley with the whole northwest will be in the Confederacy."

This statement, made slowly and deliberately in a tone of earnestness, created a profound sensation. Men sprang to their feet and paraded the floor. A babel of voices made dire confusion, and I was so frightened that I fled to my state room and hid my face in the pillow. When I again ventured to seek my corner some of the men had left the cabin, and there had developed some Union sentiment.

"You know d——n well that Louisiana would vote today to stay in the Union! You only pulled her out by one vote, and that was bought. I go with my state, but by God, I am tired of acting as a cats-paw to pull South Carolina's chestnuts out of the fire! Give Lincoln a chance! I really believe he means to be fair."

"Wait till he tries to coerce you." "Which ever side strikes the first blow is the side that goes under," were a few of the sentences I caught. But the conversation was no longer general, the conclave had broken into smaller groups, and tired and sick, I went to bed where I stayed for two days. The remainder of the trip was comparatively uneventful. We passed Vicksburg unmolested, and when we reached Cairo every lady passenger breathed a sigh of relief as she divested herself of a heavy belt she had worn since the morning before we left New Orleans—the gold was safe.

## CHAPTER IX.

### DAYS OF GREATNESS.

The period between the election and the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln was the beginning of his martyrdom. It was then he took up his cross. The southern states were seceding one by one and providing millions of dollars for war. Buchanan and his cabinet were gradually but surely bankrupting the treasury, removing all arms and munitions of war to the southern states and surrendering to them the forts and arsenals within their bounds, sending all available military forces to widely distant stations in the far west, and scattering the navy all over the world. The secession element was attempting to coerce the border states into joining the Confederacy, and the secret agents of the Knights of the Golden Circle were organizing in the free states to subvert the government.

"The north was panic stricken. Capital was crying for peace, peace at any price. Every form of compromise, from sentimental sop to abject surrender, had its nervous advocates, and Lincoln, watching the pitiful exhibition, might well have felt himself betrayed in the house of his friends." No opportunity was ever lost to exploit his supposed unfitness for high position. In the senate of the United States, in the last hours of the Thirty-eighth congress, Mr. Wigfall, of Texas, saw fit to sneer at "the ex-rail splitter, the ex-grocery keeper, the flat boat man, the ex-Abolitionist lecturer, who, tomorrow morning expects to assume the reins of government."

[There never was a human being more maligned, more ridiculed, more unsparingly accused and condemned. Ingenuity exhausted itself in efforts to insult him. Partisan malice and personal spite shamelessly contended to sting him with abuse. Vili-fication strove to pillory him at every turn.

After his inauguration, the same spirit prevailed. It was not the president of the United States that was held responsible for

public acts, but Abraham Lincoln. When General Scott ordered the heights of Arlington fortified, and placed 10,000 soldiers in position to defend Washington, General Beauregard, in an official proclamation to the people of Virginia, said:

A reckless and unprincipled tyrant has invaded your soil, Abraham Lincoln, regardless of all legal, moral or constitutional restraints, has thrown his Abolition hosts among your citizens, confiscating and destroying your property, and committing under his sanction acts of violence too revolting to be mentioned.

Upon the same day, the Richmond Examiner declared that "The just indignation of an outraged people will teach 'the Illinois Ape' a fearful lesson." In a speech before the Confederate Congress, reference was made to "Scott, the Arch Traitor, and Lincoln, the Beast." When General Lyon issued an order that any man convicted of tearing up railroad tracks or destroying bridges in Missouri should be shot, General Jeff Thompson issued a retaliatory proclamation threatening "to hang, draw and quarter a 'Lincoln Minion' for every man shot under that order." An extract from the New Orleans Picayune of May, 1861, reads:

All Massachusetts troops now in Washington are negroes, excepting one or two drummer boys. General Butler, in command, is a native of Liberia. Some of our readers will recollect Old Ben, the barber who once kept a shop on Poydras street, and who, with some money, emigrated to Liberia. General Butler is his son.

A few months after, the firing on Fort Sumter had aroused the patriotism of the nation, men were patriots, not partisans, but it was not long before party politics began to arouse a spirit of opposition to the "powers that be," and Mr. Lincoln was again put upon the pillory. Not only his opponents but many of his supporters and friends were loud in their denunciations of his policy. The Abolition element proclaimed him a "truckling coward," and referred to the soldiers of the army as "Lincoln's slave hunting blood hounds," while the Union men of the border states arrogantly demanded that he enforce the law of the land, particularly referring to the Fugitive Slave Law. When the slaves of rebels were pronounced contraband of war, "Lincoln's doctrine of military necessity was denounced as a new born heresy, the sum of all political and military villainies, no less absurd than villainous," by both Abolitionists and slave holders.



Not until 1864, however, did northern papers dare openly to endorse all the vilifications that had been heaped upon the good name of Mr. Lincoln in the south. Many of the Democratic papers, in their zeal for party victory, were so treasonable in their utterances that they were suppressed as a military necessity. Bitterest of all to Mr. Lincoln must have been the vile attacks of the press in his old home that he loved so well. A short time ago a friend, while looking over files of Springfield papers in search of some information about the State Sanitary Fair, came across the following squib in the Springfield State Register, August 4, 1864:

Today is "Massa Linkum's day of fasting, humiliation and prayer." As The Register thinks, the nation has ample reason for fasting, because Lincoln has made food so high; for humiliation at the disgrace his miserable, imbecile policies have brought upon us, and for prayer that God in His goodness will spare us a second term of such a president.

Even after Vicksburg and Gettysburg, and the battles of the Wilderness had cast a ray of light and hope on the sadness and darkness of his life of trial, the enemies of freedom pursued him with a bitter hate, while his friends doubted and mistrusted him.

Four years of these petty persecutions made of the fruit of his victory at the polls wormwood and gall. But after these four years of patient endurance, forbearance and loving kindness, he, at last, tasted the sweet fruits of success in the ultimate triumph of the cause of the Union. The tidings of the surrender of Lee at Appomatox, of Jones, Thomson and Kirby Smith, by which over 100,000 combatants had laid down their arms, sent a thrill of exultation over the country. "The pealing bells of victory sounded sweetly on ears to which they chanted their tale of ended strife; of a people really free and of a Union to be forever undissoluble. The thanksgiving that welled up in every breast found voice in public utterance of praise to Him to whom our forefathers had commended the infant Union of states."

"But the chants of victory were soon changed to cries of woe, the peons of triumph into the saddest of requiems." The life of Abraham Lincoln had been laid on the altar of patriotism; but he had been permitted to see the fetters fall from three million bondsmen, to witness the triumphant termination of that gigantic struggle in which for four years he had been the central figure

and which triumph his sagacity, his patience, his unswerving devotion had rendered possible.

Deliberate in action, calm in danger, sincere in thought, kindly in feeling, wise in council, this devoted servant of the state guided the nation to safety and then found rest from the labors that had worn and saddened him for five long stormy years.

His final triumph through martyrdom has, in the prophetic words of Owen Lovejoy, placed him on the topmost stone of the Temple of Fame:

"There is a niche for Abraham Lincoln in Freedom's Holy Fane, radiant with the light of Liberty. In that niche he will stand proudly, nobly, gloriously, with shattered fetters and broken chains beneath his feet. His fame will be a fame worth living for, aye more, a fame worth dying for, though that death led through the blood of Gethsemane and the agony of the accursed Tree. That is a fame which has glory and honor and Eternal Life. His name will not only be enrolled in this Earthly Temple, but it will be traced on the living stones of that Temple which rears itself amid the thrones and Hierarchies of Heaven, whose top stone is to be brought in with shouting of Grace—Grace unto it."

## PART THREE—RICHARD J. OGLESBY

He walked the sunny side of fate;  
The wise world smiled and called him great;  
The golden fruitage of success  
Dropped at his feet in plenteousness.

—Thomas Moore.



### CHAPTER I.

#### MOST DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN.

Decatur claims as her most distinguished and best beloved citizen, Richard J. Oglesby, Major General U. S. A., three times governor of Illinois, and once United States senator. Although not born in Decatur, Decatur was the home of his youth and of his maturity, and his home when the people of Illinois heaped honors upon him. He loved Decatur and delighted to honor her.

When the legislature of Illinois made an appropriation for a portrait of Governor Oglesby to be hung in the state house, Miss Johns, of Decatur, wrote to the governor asking him to give the commission to Joseph De Camp, an eminent Boston artist who had been her instructor. "No Laura," he answered, "I won't. That portrait must be painted by an Illinois artist, and if a little Decatur girl who has been a pupil of Mr. De Camp will undertake it, I would above all things be delighted to have a Decatur artist honor me by painting it. Illinois certainly, Decatur, if possible, must do the work. Will you try it?"

Miss Laura Johns painted the picture and it now hangs in the state house at Springfield.

It was during the few sittings that he gave Miss Johns for that portrait that he told me the history of his early life.

"Six times when I was a boy," he said, "I tried to get away from Decatur, and six times I was forced by fate to return. I

was ambitious, but there seemed no opening for an ambitious boy in Decatur. Poverty compelled me to work, but neither carpentry, nor farming, nor rope making satisfied my ambitious soul. I failed in every thing, yet I knew that some day I would not be a failure. When I enlisted for the Mexican War and was made lieutenant I thought I had found my place in the world. I was to be a soldier.

"But the war ended and again Decatur drew me and poverty compelled me. I wanted to study law. I had found out that when I talked, men listened, and was anxious to try my gift of gab,—which seemed to be the only gift I had,—at the bar. I was fool enough to think that to be a good orator would make me a successful lawyer, but I soon learned that gab was only one of the smallest requisites for a lawyer. I was fortunate enough to find in Sherry Wait a partner who supplied my deficiencies. I was not cut out for a lawyer; I know that now. I have been a successful politician but not a lawyer. I believe I have been of some service to my country, and my life has not been wasted."

Mr. Oglesby's origin was not of the humble order of Mr. Lincoln's. His parents were people of education and refinement. His father was a farmer and slave owner, had been a member of the Kentucky legislature and a colonel of a militia regiment. His mother was of English descent and his father was Scotch. They were prosperous people, until in June, 1833, when the cholera broke out in the vicinity in which they lived and in a very short time father and mother, two brothers and a sister fell victims to the insatiate scourge. The home was broken up and the family scattered. Richard, who was then eight years old, with his sisters, were taken to the home of an uncle. The settlement of his father's estate necessitated the sale of the slaves, and it was witnessing this sale that made of Oglesby an abolitionist.

Mr. F. B. Wilkie, who was a guest of Governor Oglesby at Ogleshurst a few years before his death, published a very interesting account of his visit and repeated in the governor's own words some reminiscences of his early life. By permission of Lieutenant Governor John Oglesby I quote from Mr. Wilkie's article some of these stories, the first of which was in answer to a

question as to how he, a Kentuckian, became a confirmed abolitionist.

"Uncle Tim" was a slave who had descended from my grandfather to my father, and was one of several in the family. My father died when I was a small boy and we became embarrassed, and in order to divide up what little there was left, "Uncle Tim" had to be sold. I well remember him as he stood up on a box ready for the sale. He was a powerful man, far above the average height, with a manly bearing, a fine face, and a skin as black as ebony. He had always been very fond of us children and I thought almost as much of him as if he had been my father.

As he stood waiting, he implored, with tears streaming from his eyes, a brother of my father to buy him. That was impossible, and observing his dejection and surmising its cause, I said:

"'Uncle Tim!' I am going to work to earn money, and when I get enough I will buy you and set you free."

His face lighted up with pride and pleasure as I said this, but a look of despair soon clouded the brightness. He came down, lifted me up in his arms, and said sadly: "Thanks, Marse Dick, you are a poor orphan and won't never be rich enough to buy 'Uncle Tim.'" He was sold, and being past his prime, only brought some \$400.

I moved to Illinois in time; I struggled; I went back to Kentucky; and grew no richer. I used to see "Uncle Tim" occasionally, and I always assured him that some day I would buy him. He always seemed to listen to me gratefully, but apparently had no hope of my success. In 1849, I went to California, and after much effort I made a few thousand dollars, and then returned to the states. The first thing I did was to fulfill my promise. I sent the money to my brother and "Uncle Tim" was purchased.

I was standing in front of the porch of my brother's house some days later when "Uncle Tim" came out of a piece of woods a little distance away, and approached along a pathway. It was a striking picture,—such as I never before or since have witnessed. He was a giant in stature; his abundant gray hair was thrown back on his shoulders; his face was livid and ashen, reminding one of the statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo. His countenance was aglow—here Oglesby rose to his feet, and, with expanded chest, brought his upraised arm down with the sweep of a sledge-hammer, and continued,—“and shone as if lighted by the very presence of the Holy Ghost. When he caught sight of me, he stopped, threw back his head, raised his arms for above him, and exclaimed: “My God! My God! Has the little orphan boy lived to buy and set me free!”

Then he put his arms around me and tried to lift me as in the old days, but he had grown too weak and I had grown too large. “You can't lift me any more, 'Uncle Tim,’” I said. “No,” he answered in a sad tone and then with an exulting tone he shouted, as he turned his face toward the sky, “Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I'se free!”

The impression left upon young Oglesby's mind by the breaking up of his family ties was indelible. He was eight years old. Death had taken father, mother, brothers and sisters. Financial ruin had deprived him of home and farm and faithful servants, and with nothing but a pair of willing hands, a loving heart, and



an ambitious brain, he was thrown upon the charity of relatives almost as resourceless as was the orphan boy whom they sheltered and cared for. From the day of his father's death, his career was one long struggle with poverty and disappointment. Yet, though all these trials gave a tinge of melancholy to his naturally bouyant disposition, they did not daunt his courage nor break his faith in ultimate success. He once told me that there never had been a time in his life when he faltered or feared. He believed destiny had in store for him a mission and would not be balked of its purpose.

He had very little schooling. He learned to read and write while living in Kentucky, and after he came to Decatur went to school for three months, and then graduated from the school house to complete his education in the University of Work and the study of men!

In 1836, Mr. Willis Oglesby moved to Decatur, bringing with him young Dick and his three sisters. One of these sisters died soon after their arrival, and was buried in Decatur. Amanda, afterwards Mrs. Henry Prather, and Ophelia, Mrs. J. J. Peddecord, always welcomed and cared for their younger brother when he made one of his many returns to Decatur, and his migratory uncle had abandoned and left him to his own resources. Many old citizens of Decatur remember quaint old "Grandma" Oglesby, who was the "Aunt Judy" Oglesby loved and honored as a mother, and who lived to see him occupy the high position of governor of Illinois. She always loved to tell stories of "Dicky's" escapades, and final returns to her sheltering arms.

Mr. Oglesby was not financially a success in his early youth; though for that matter neither was anybody else. Illinois was his home, and Illinois was under a cloud. An enormous state debt hung over the people, an incubus that paralyzed individual effort. There was no money, and barter was the only trade medium. He that had nothing to barter but the labor of his hands could always find enough to eat, though perhaps very little to wear, and nothing to lay by in store for the future. This ambitious young man learned the carpenter's trade, then tried farming, and after a summer's hard work found himself with \$6.50 in his



pocket, the result of his portion of the season's crop. This munificent return did not include his board for which he had chored with a relative.

His share of the crop raised that summer was taken in hemp. He invented a machine for breaking it, built a rope walk and manufactured it, and, in telling the story, exclaimed that he "had the proud satisfaction of having made from *my* hemp, broken by *my* machine and twisted on *my* walk, the rope with which the first flat boat on the Sangamon river was launched."

He always hoped to be able to study law, and whether the above \$6.50 was the capital upon which he ventured to go to Springfield and enter the office of Judge Silas W. Robbins as a student, I am not informed, but after the hemp episode, he gave up manual labor and "read the first volume of Blackstone's Commentaries."

After one year of study he was licensed to practice law and opened an office in Sullivan, where he "studied the constitution of the state and also the constitution of the United States," had a few cases in the spring term of court, and then once more returned to Decatur.

War had been declared with Mexico and Oglesby enlisted as a private. Although at the time the position was a humble one, the step had its influence in later life. It prepared him for intelligent participation in the gigantic Civil war of the states, and was the foundation on which was based the high promotion which was constructed for his benefit as a reward for his services.

He enlisted in Company C of the Fourth Illinois Infantry. Colonel Baker in command. He was elected second lieutenant and at last found himself in a congenial atmosphere. He became a close student of Hardee's tactics and was made drillmaster of the company. He was so successful in this work that in a little time he had made himself thoroughly disliked by many of the members, who were not disposed to submit to such tasks, and who saw no reason why they should not enjoy soldiering as they would a picnic.

A little episode grew out of this unpopularity which is

illustrative of a salient trait in the character of the future Governor. The opposition against him grew into open murmurs and arranged itself about a member of the same company, who, it was urged by the malcontents, would be a better man in Oglesby's place. They began to demand that there should be held another election.

One day, at the close of a dress parade, a young man stepped in front of the company and said in a loud voice, "I will bet two jackknives and a quarter of a dollar that Blank (naming the rival of the unpopular lieutenant) can beat Dick Oglesby in a foot race of sixty yards."

A friend of the latter immediately stepped forward and accepted the challenge."

"I knew at once," said Oglesby, in commenting on the incident, "what this challenge meant. It was an attempt to disgrace me. He was a noted athlete, especially as a runner, and it was thought he could beat me easily. Then it was expected that I would be forced to resign, and he would, of course, be elected to fill the vacancy.

"I accepted the challenge, for there was nothing else to do. It was success or ruin. The proposed event created an immense amount of excitement and was the talk of the camp. I had my supporters and they bet their jack-knives, money, when they had it, and anything which would be accepted as a wager.

"The appointed day came, and, stripped to the buff, except as to my trousers, we toed the line. Both were bareheaded, I was barefooted, while he wore his stockings. Along on both sides of the track to be run over, the entire regiment was gathered, and with it were vast numbers of civilian spectators. I felt that my very life was on the race, and that I would win—I must win.

"The word was given, and we started like deer hounds. We ran abreast, not the fraction of an inch being perceptible as the gain of either. Pull away from him I could not. The crowd roared and cheered, and frantically called the names of one or the other of us to win the race. Clinging close to each other, we went on till we began to near the line, and for a moment a feel-

ing of despair came over me, and I believed I was lost! Just then there came over me like an electric flash the conviction, I cannot, I must not, lose! A mighty impulse possessed me; I made a prodigious bound, and crossed the line six inches in advance!

"The roar that went up from the crowd was deafening! I was the hero of the hour! From that time there was no opposition in the company, and my opponent became my hearty friend."

## CHAPTER II.

### ARGONAUT AND ORATOR.

The life of a soldier, especially that of an officer, proved very congenial to young Oglesby. His record in the Mexican war was an enviable one. He fought at Vera Cruz and Cerro Gordo, commanding his company in both battles. At the close of the war he seriously contemplated entering the regular army, believing himself peculiarly fitted for a soldier's life, but again Decatur called him, and he returned to the study and practice of law. He attended a Louisville law school for three months, received his diploma, and in the spring of 1849 became a member of the Macon County Bar.

But his wandering disposition and his thirst for adventure soon drew him away from his chosen profession, and the lure of the El Dorado of the west led him to join a party of eight Decatur men who crossed the plains to California in 1849.

His brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Prather, Mr. E. O. Smith and Mr. Samuel Powers were members of this party. Oglesby drove a team of six mules from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento. The trip consumed ninety-five days and was one of hardship and adventure. Though financially successful, Mr. Oglesby always said that the gold he acquired in this venture was of less value to him than the stimulating desire for a broader education and a more comprehensive knowledge of the world and of men, which was engendered by his two years of experience in search of it, though he returned to Decatur with \$4,500. He had lost more than half of his gains through the failure of a business agent and the burning of Nevada City, but he was no longer compelled by poverty to suppress his ambitious desire for a career wider than that of a mere laborer, so, upon the advice and with the assistance of Mr. Lincoln, he decided to enter the arena of politics, and became a candidate for presidential elector on the Whig ticket. He

made numerous political speeches at the time and established a reputation as a stump speaker.

In 1853 Mr. Oglesby formed a law partnership with Sheridan Wait, who became his lifelong friend and adviser.

Mr. Oglesby was never satisfied with his educational acquirements and determined to devote the proceeds of the California venture to acquiring a larger knowledge of the world than that presented by the limited confines in which he moved. He decided that, as he was too old to take a course in college, he would enter the school of travel, and in April, 1856, he left Illinois for a tour of Great Britain and Europe, which was finally extended to Egypt, Arabia, Palestine and Asia Minor. He first traveled over Ireland and Scotland and next visited the English parliament, which was at that time in session. He visited Paris and Berlin and other European cities, extending his tour to St. Petersburg and throughout Russia.

After more than a year in Europe, Mr. Oglesby sailed for Egypt and went up the river Nile to Thebes. Over forty days was consumed in that Nile journey. He then traveled by caravan across the desert to the Holy Land. He became greatly interested in the study of the Bible while he was in Palestine and brought home some very interesting souvenirs, among them two bottles of water from the river Jordan. These were carefully preserved and the water was used many years after in christening his children. He has often told it on himself that it was on the peak of Mt. Sinai that he first committed to memory the ten commandments.

Under conditions at that time it took, all told, forty days for the trip from Cairo to Jerusalem. He traveled over all portions of Asia Minor, finally arriving at Beirut, where he set sail for Constantinople. He next visited Greece and, after a prolonged stay in that country, went to Italy where his observations were no less thorough and his stay sufficiently prolonged to give him a comprehensive knowledge of that country. Heading now towards home, he passed through Switzerland and on to Berlin, thence to Holland, to Paris, to England, and finally arrived home

in December, 1857. In those days such a trip was almost unprecedented.

That journey was of incalculable value to Oglesby in developing his mind and completing for him an education which had been far too much neglected in the schools. He was one of those rare men who travel studiously and intelligently. His acute observations of the strange and wondrous sights of the old world were told in his own quaint fashion, much to the delight of those whose privilege it was to hear him. The story had to be told so often that his friends finally asked him to deliver a series of lectures on his travels.

The first of these was advertised as "A Lecture on the Holy Land," to be delivered in Powers Hall. Mr. Oglesby had one great advantage over modern lecturers on travel in having a story to tell that was new to his audience, not one of whom had crossed the ocean.

When he stepped upon the platform and laid his notes on the table before him, he was received with warm applause, and commenced a little "preliminary talk" about his reasons for becoming a traveler; about his emotions on leaving his native land; about his trip to New York; about the sea and sea-sickness. He was intensely interested in his own story and his audience was enthralled with his eloquence, oblivious to time or space on the subject of the proposed lecture.

After about an hour of this "little preliminary," he looked at his watch and with a look of profound astonishment exclaimed, "It's after 10 o'clock and I have not got started to the Holy Land!"

"Go on!" "Let's have the Holy Land some other time," and similar exclamations came from every part of the hall.

"Well, then, I will let the Holy Land go for tonight," said Mr. Oglesby, "and I will tell you a little about what I saw in Russia and Poland, which will be quite as interesting and will not take so long."

When he got to Poland he again looked at his watch and declared that it was 11 o'clock. "Go on!" "Go on!" fairly shrieked the audience. Dr. Trowbridge, who had presided at the meeting,



called for quiet and offered a resolution, "That Mr. Oglesby be requested to continue his 'preliminary talk' tomorrow evening, and to give his lecture on the Holy Land at some future date."

The resolution was enthusiastically carried and resulted in a series of these talks that, I think, took five evenings to complete, and then we had not enough.

The fame of these lectures went abroad and Mr. Oglesby was in great demand as a lecturer for charitable and church purposes.

It was these "talks of travel" that first developed the wonderful magnetic power of Oglesby's eloquence. His audiences never tired. If he himself was enthused, he generally became as excited as his audience. Great rivers of perspiration would pour off his brow and down his cheeks. An admirer once said, in speaking of his eloquence, "He melts off his collars and his cuffs."

Probably as a "stump speaker" he had no superior on the continent. He seemed to at once get himself in sympathy with his auditors. He was electric, moving, full of a penetrating enthusiasm which communicated itself to his listeners, and they thenceforth were swayed under his impetuous eloquence like the waves of the sea by a tempest.

"Some one relates that in 1878 he spoke at a political meeting in Tuscola. Two old men came into the hall, so old, so decrepit, so rheumatic in their ancient bodies that they could but just crawl. They were rheumy, stiff, deaf and querulous. One came in on crutches and the other hobbled along painfully, supported by a couple of canes. They secured seats and sat down as if they intended to stay there the remainder of their days. Oglesby was at his best. He warmed up gradually until his listeners began to writhe and gasp under the influence of his inspired words. The two old men shared the contagion of his eloquence; they straightened up, their dim eyes began to enkindle and their slow pulse to keep time with the outrushing torrent. A few moments more and the two octogenarians were on their feet with the remainder of the audience, dancing wildly about, swinging their canes and crutches, and yelling in their enthusiasm with a

volume and a strength of tone which they had not before known for half a century. For a moment they were young again."

Mr. Oglesby's eloquence was always convincing. One who listened to him, who watched him as he talked, felt and knew beyond all cavil that he meant just what he said, that he concealed nothing, that there was no unuttered secret thought. He impressed one with the conviction that he was no sham; that he had a profound hatred for all that is hollow or pretends to be what it is not. His beautiful sincerity shone on his honest face, rang in his vibrating and hearty tones, and forced itself as an unalterable conviction into the consciousness of every one who listened to him.

He was once asked what method he pursued in preparing a speech and answered, "I make no preparation. The only speech which I ever wrote was the one which I delivered at the dedication of the Lincoln monument at Springfield. That I read, and it is the exception of my life.

"How do I speak? I don't know. The other evening I was at the encampment at Decatur and was called on for a speech. When I rose to my feet I had not the smallest idea what I should say. I happened to have the ritual in my hand and unconsciously glanced at the opening line. An idea came, and I followed it up. I spoke for some time, and I judge from the enthusiasm of the audience that the address was well received. (It was vociferously received). And yet, till I was on my feet and happened to glance at the opening line of the ritual, I had not a shadow of a thought as to what I was to say. What is curious about it is, that the line of thought which I followed was entirely new to me,—one I had never entertained before.

"I never study a subject in advance. When I get on my feet I have an idea, or one presents itself, and I begin to bring it out. As I get on a little further another comes, like a little side rivulet, and then there comes another and another of these feeders till there is a heavy stream which carries me along, as it were, without effort."

In 1858, the Republicans of this congressional district, hoping for a political revolution, decided to put Oglesby's eloquence in

the balance against the strong Democratic sentiment that ruled the southern counties. He was not nominated by a convention, but was chosen to make the run as an independent candidate. His opponent was Mr. James C. Robinson, whom Oglesby challenged to meet him in a joint debate. Mr. Robinson strenuously objected to meeting Oglesby as an independent, and demanded that he show his colors. Mr. Oglesby thus tells the story:

My position as an independent was untenable. I saw that Mr. Robinson, with a large majority to begin with, would be likely to increase it, and without consulting my friends, in our joint debate at Marshall, in Clark county, I came out and took strong Republican ground; and from that time on it was a rough and tumble fight, but good naturedly conducted to the end of the campaign. Mr. Robinson was an able debater and a strong man in his party, and I had my hands full to compete with him.

On one occasion a meeting was held at Louisville, Clay county, and as Robinson had the concluding speech, I adjourned to the street in front of the hotel, where I found an Irishman with a violin, and about him were some of his friends. He asked me if I could play well enough for a street dance and, taking the fiddle, I began playing the "Arkansas Traveler." A crowd soon collected. Large numbers came out of the court house in which Robinson was speaking, and soon there was a dance in progress in which everybody took a part.

Upon closing his speech, my worthy opponent came out, looked for a moment over the scene and then, to get even with me, he rushed into the dance, pulled off his coat and commenced dancing with the vim of a dervish. It is my opinion that before the dance was over he had recaptured from me every friend that I had made by my fiddling. The only satisfaction that I got out of the occurrence was that I had been able to make the Democratic candidate dance to my music.

The friends of Robinson had confidently expected that he would carry the district by from 4,000 to 5,000 votes. His actual majority was a little over 1,800.

Though defeated by a small majority for this, the first office that he had ever sought, the campaign was really a personal triumph. By his convincing earnestness, his hearty good nature and his fervid eloquence he had made hosts of friends, even among his opponents, one of whom once said, "Just set Oglesby to talking and, by Jove, he will soon make an abolitionist of ever blasted Democrat in the state!"

Mr. Oglesby had for years been a warm admirer of Mr. Lincoln, and after the Douglas-Lincoln debates he became convinced that "Mr. Lincoln was the man who could lead the Republican party out of the wilderness." "Of course Seward is the logical

candidate," said he, "but Lincoln is the man of all men who can be depended upon to safely guide the nation through the raging flood of secession which is overwhelming us."

The idea of inventing some popular slogan which could be used as a talisman, after the pattern of the Log Cabin and Hard Cider craze of 1840, occurred to Oglesby, and the Rail banner which nominated Mr. Lincoln was the result. The story of the conception and execution of that "coup d'etat" is told in a former chapter but it is certain that to Mr. Oglesby's inspired action on that occasion the world owes Mr. Lincoln's nomination and election, and his subsequent glorious career.

## CHAPTER III.

### LAYS OUT DECATUR STREETS.

Part of Mr. Oglesby's California gold was added to a land warrant, received as a soldier in the Mexican war, and invested in land north and west of Decatur which he laid out in town lots. When naming the streets in Oglesby's addition, Mr. Lowber Burrows suggested that he commemorate the sources from which the purchase money came, so Eldorado street was named for Mr. Oglesby's successful California venture, and Cerro Gordo after the battle of Cerro Gordo in the Mexican war in which he had participated with distinction and which was the source of his land warrant.

In 1858 and 1859, Mr. Oglesby and his partner, Mr. Wait, entered extensively into speculation in town lots, and were quite successful in their ventures. In 1859, Mr. Oglesby married Miss Anna E. White. His bride was one of Decatur's society belles, who, with her sister, "Hattie," (Mrs. F. L. Hays), had made their father's house one of the gayest in the town. The marriage was a happy one. There was never a more devoted and loving husband and father than Richard Oglesby.

Two of his children sleep beside their mother in Greenwood cemetery, and two, Mrs. Olive Oglesby Snyder, of Kansas City, and Robert (Bob), who once took a long journey around the world in a sailing vessel and afterwards made a fortune in the Kansas oil fields, are still living. "Bob" was born in the governor's mansion in Springfield, only a short time before his mother's death.

## CHAPTER IV.

### FIRST TO RAISE REGIMENT.

In 1860, in order to aid in the re-election of Judge Trumbull to the United States senate, Oglesby consented to run for the state senate in this district, which had heretofore been Democratic by a majority of 1,200. Colonel Color, his opponent, was a strong and popular man, and their joint debates were very exciting. Oglesby was elected by a majority of 240 votes, served one session in the senate and resigned, in 1861, to accept the colonelship of the Eight Illinois regiment.

In less than twenty-four hours after the lightning flashed the news of the surrender of Fort Sumpter and three hours after the president's call for volunteers to defend the Union, Oglesby had tendered his services to Governor Yates, "in any capacity where he could best serve his country." His experience in the Mexican war and the soldierly record he had made, caused Governor Yates to appoint him colonel, and two companies were organized in Decatur within twenty-four hours to join his regiment.

Colonel Oglesby's regiment was the first tendered in Illinois to the governor, but the formalities required in resigning his position as state senator before he could receive his commission, caused a few hours delay, and Colonel John Cook, being "on the ground and free," had the honor of commanding the ranking regiment.

Colonel Cook's regiment consisted at the time of the Springfield Zouaves, an organized and drilled militia body with several incipient companies that were being enlisted in Springfield and vicinity. This contest for the honor of ranking regiment caused a good deal of ill feeling. Both regiments were sworn in on the same day. There was a race for headquarters and Colonel Oglesby was first by two hours. But Colonel Cook's Zouaves were on the ground, uniformed and armed, while Colonel Oglesby's five full companies were on the cars en route. A compromise was



made by giving Cook's regiment the ranking number, while Oglesby was made the ranking colonel.

When they arrived at Cairo, Colonel Oglesby found himself in command of a regiment of old men, young men and boys, most of whom were friends and acquaintances to whom he had always been "Dick," and they "Tom" and "Harry." There was very little understanding of discipline or of military etiquette. The old men freely offered him advice, the young men companionship and the boys, jokes, and he felt like a prophet without honor in his own place.

One morning after regimental drill, Oglesby concluded to make a little speech instructing his men in the position and duties of soldiers.

"I have no doubt," he said, "that most of you think that you know as much about how this thing should be run as I do, and I expect that you do, but you have chosen me and I have been commissioned by the governor to run it, and I am going to do it to the best of my abilities, so help me God! You are no longer mere men; you are soldiers. Your uniform marks you as part of the United States government which you are sworn to honor and respect. Your captain's uniform marks him as your superior, even though he may have once been your boot-black. Your duty is to obey orders whether you think them right or not. Your officers are to do the thinking."

This speech, made very solemnly and emphatically, impressed the men with a new sense of their position, and was freely discussed at mess and in camp.

When the colonel retired to his tent that night he was tired and lonesome. He doffed his coat and vest, put on a pair of easy carpet slippers, and went out of doors and, with his hands behind his back, paced up and down, up and down, increasing the lap of his course at each round. Suddenly he heard the summons:

"Halt! Who goes there? Advance and give the countersign!"

"Oh, I'm not outside the lines!" the colonel answered.

"Advance and give the countersign, whoever you are," replied the sentinel. "No one passes this line without it."

"Well, I'll be ——!" I believe I have wandered outside, but

you know me. I have forgotten the password, but you will let me through. I am Oglesby, your colonel."

"Right about face! march!" called the sentinel.

"Oh, Jim, you know me! What is the use?"

"Well, sir, I think I know you, but I do not see any uniform, and the soldier is not to think but to obey. Right about face! March!"

And at the point of the bayonet, the colonel, who did the thinking, was marched to the guard house by the soldier who obeyed orders.

Almost the entire term for which the Eighth Illinois was enlisted was spent at or near Cairo doing guard duty. For three long weary months our boys stood guard and drilled and waited at Cairo. Their term of enlistment had expired. Their wives were at home doing men's work that their children might have bread to eat. They had enlisted to fight; to put down treason and rebellion; and they had drilled and stood guard. The overpowering enthusiasm with which they had rushed into the fray had died from inaction. They were disheartened and homesick, and they were asked to re-enlist for three years more of the weary work.

Colonel Oglesby had suffered with his men. Naturally fond of ease and luxury, he shared the fare and the fate of enlisted men. His active spirit chafed under the restraint of mere guard duty. But he too had learned that a soldier's duty was to obey orders and let his superiors do the thinking. He was anxious that a more aggressive policy should be adopted, and had little faith in the loyalty of the border states.

Especially distasteful to Oglesby was the necessity of enforcing the Fugitive Slave Law. Kentucky slave owners came boldly into his camp and demanded the arrest of their "runaway niggers," and when he was obliged by military rule to order a fugitive slave arrested, conducted outside the lines and turned over to his master by a corporal's guard he said, "It was the bitterest pill that I ever swallowed; I actually shed tears."

## CHAPTER V.

### GENERAL AND GOVERNOR.

The Eighth regiment was mustered out in July, 1861, but the majority of the men re-enlisted at once, to serve "three years, or for the war." Colonel Oglesby continued in command until April 1, 1862, when he was promoted to brigadier general, in recognition of the valuable service in that famous battle of Fort Donelson, where so many Macon county soldiers fell.

At the bloody battle of Corinth, while leading a brave charge, he was shot through the left lung by an ounce ball. He, with General Heckelman, who an hour before had been wounded by a shell, were carried to a hotel in Corinth, where a consultation of surgeons pronounced them both mortally wounded.

In less than an hour after they were taken to the hotel, the rebels had penetrated to within a few yards of their refuge, and they were hastily placed in an ambulance and taken to Sulphur Springs, two miles in the rear. General Heckelman died an hour after their arrival there.

The next morning Oglesby, who was thought to be dying, was returned to Corinth and placed in a private house. At General Oglesby's request, General Grant detailed Dr. S. T. Trowbridge, who had been surgeon of the Eighth regiment and for years a warm friend of Oglesby, to go to the latter's bedside and take charge of the case.

Upon Dr. Trowbridge's arrival he found "all hope abandoned," and no treatment ordered except to "lessen the pain." But the doctor, knowing his patient as a man of splendid physical development, a strong will and a hopeful nature, determined to fight death while there was a breath of life. He spoke a few encouraging words to his friend and together they entered into a compact to cheat death of its victim.

Mrs. Oglesby, with her father, Mrs. Prather, his sister and Mr. Peddecord, his brother-in-law, went immediately to Corinth,

where for weeks the brave fight held them in suspense. Dr. Trowbridge, believing it possible to move his patient, and thinking that a change of conditions and surroundings would be helpful, asked General Grant for an order to remove Mr. Oglesby to his home. The request was granted with an additional order for Dr. Trowbridge to accompany him and remain as long as his services would benefit the patient. A special car was assigned the party, Dr. Trowbridge's inventive genius prepared a semi-recumbent seat which was swung in the car, and the trip was made in comparative comfort.

General Oglesby's return to health was slow and painful, and was one of those miracles that are sometimes wrought by the indomitable will power of a strong nature assisted by a skillful physician. He used often to say that he was one of the few men who were permitted to read their own obituaries. "My eulogists," said he, "have set the standard so high that it is going to be hard for me to live a life that will not disgrace my past."

He had only partly recovered when in November, 1862, he was commissioned major general, in recognition of his valiant services, and in the spring of 1863, was assigned to the Sixteenth army corps. The bullet which had laid him low at Corinth had never been removed and he suffered constant pain from its presence, and, fearing that he would not be able to perform the arduous duties of his position, he resigned his command in July, 1863. But General Grant refused to accept the resignation and he was detailed to court martial duty in Washington, where he remained until May, 1864, when he resigned to accept the Republican nomination for governor.

President Lincoln and General Grant no longer refused to accept his resignation from the army. His forceful eloquence could be made an effective weapon in the war with treason, and the time had come when a victory at the polls was of more importance than on the field of battle.

Two years before, a complete revolution in the ballot of Illinois had placed the Democratic party in power. The absence from the state of 135,440 loyal soldiers, two-thirds of whom would have voted to sustain the administration, had given the

secession element an opportunity to revive old party lines. The leaders of the Democrats, hoping to regain influence and power, took advantage of the general "repugnance to the threatened draft, the continued and increasing depreciation of the state currency, the low wages paid the soldiers, the president's proposition of compensated emancipation, and the uncertainty of the outcome of the war," to arraign the discontent of a disappointed people in opposition to the Union party. The result was a Democratic victory, the majority vote on state officers being over 70,000.

While the great body of the Democratic party was opposed to secession, and adhered to its organization only for the accomplishment of political results, there was an element that sympathized with the south, who were highly elated by the result of the election. They no longer feared to show their colors. Their sympathy with secession was bold and outspoken. The Chicago Times, the Springfield Register and other so called Democratic papers became so treasonable in their utterances that they were suppressed as a military necessity. The bitterness of political opposition to the conduct of the war centered itself in personal vituperation of Mr. Lincoln. The friends of the administration found themselves occupied in defending the president. A kind of apologetic spirit pervaded the utterances of the press. Where there was not open opposition to this policy, Lincoln received only half hearted support from his friends.

There was an election coming on and the times were critical. It was important that some one who knew and believed in Mr. Lincoln should be called to his support, and he himself selected General Oglesby as the man. Largely through Mr. Lincoln's influence, and much to his delight, Oglesby was nominated for governor of Illinois.

Forgetting his debilitated condition, ignoring his still painful wound, Oglesby sprang into the arena of debate, and "made things lively." He entered into no glove contests, but with bare hands administered effective punishment. He made no apologies for the president's policies, but boldly and almost prophetically declared that the time would come when the almost God-like wisdom, foresight and forbearance of the misunderstood

Lincoln would place him in the calendar of saints and all the "world would bow down and worship him."

"His strong feeling and resonant voice, his homely metaphors and vigorous denunciations, his humorous sallies, forcible reasoning and his passionate manner," roused his hearers to almost hysterical enthusiasm. "His mobile features, his clean shaven expressive face and his bluff hearty western manner gave his appearance a charm which was brightened by a physique of symmetrical and commanding proportions."

The political campaign of 1864 will long be remembered for its bitterness, much of which was contributed by General Oglesby. He denounced the Copperheads, as northern sympathizers of the south were called, with a savage fierceness that drove them to fury, while political critics and military fault finders, who were free with their advice and denunciations of Mr. Lincoln's "temporizings," were held up to execration with hardly less bitterness and fiery invective.

The Republican ticket was successful in Illinois by a majority of 30,736, showing an increase in the Republican vote over 1862 of 60,000, not including the soldiers' vote. And Oglesby was elected Governor of Illinois.



## CHAPTER VI.

### FROM DECATUR TO GREAT DUTIES.

Citizens of Decatur had resolved to make the inauguration of Governor Oglesby a gala occasion. Sherman's triumphant army had "marched through Georgia from Atlanta to the sea." Thomas had broken the backbone of the rebellion in the west, victory after victory had crowned the Union arms, and people felt that they had a right for the first time in four years to rejoice and be exceedingly glad. Large delegations, irrespective of party, were going to Springfield to do homage to the man who had honored Decatur. Society was agog with preparations for the Inaugural Ball. Suddenly, like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, came the news that little five-year-old "Dickey" Oglesby was dying with diphtheria.

For a week the stricken father wrestled in agony, hoping against hope that his child would live. For the first time in his life he had, a few days before, punished the child for disobedience, and now remorse took hold of him and with prayers and tears he pleaded with the little unconscious sufferer for pardon. The boy died the day before the day set for inauguration of the governor.

The excitement of the campaign, the jubilation over Union victories and the preparation for entering upon his new duties, added to the suffering from his unhealed wound, had strained his powers of endurance to the limit of his strength, and now this fearful blow had completely unmanned him. For a few days his friends and physicians entertained grave fears for his reason. Those who knew him best knew that the call of duty was the only rallying power that would save him, and urged that the postponed inauguration should take place as soon as possible. The oath of office was quietly administered to Governor Oglesby and the other state officers on January 17, 1865.

The thirteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States, which declares that "Slavery and involuntary servitude, except for the punishment of crime, is forever prohibited in the United States and its territories," was at that time the engrossing topic of public interest. It was known that Mr. Lincoln believed its passage to be of vital importance to the final suppression of the rebellion, but there were many timid souls who feared that it would inflame the border states, still nominally loyal, and force them into open rebellion. Not so, thought Governor Oglesby. The keynote of his patriotic inaugural address is found in one of the opening sentences:

"With our eyes open and our hearts full of devotion to the flag of our country, we declare before all the world that the rebellion and human slavery shall fall and perish together."

In discussing the much mooted question of what is to become of the negro when he is free, he said:

"It might be better asked what may not become of him. He can labor, he can fight, he can learn, improve, aspire, and, if after we shall have tried as long to make him a useful man as we have tried to keep him a degraded slave, we shall fail and he shall fail, there will be time enough left to solve this persistent question. If there were no higher motive for emancipation, I would still fervently advocate it as a punishment to traitors for the crime of treason."

On the thirty-first day of January, 1865, the congress of the United States passed the thirteenth amendment to the constitution. Senator Trumbull immediately telegraphed the fact to Governor Oglesby, who at once sent a message to the legislature in which he said, "Let Illinois be the first state in the Union to ratify, by act of her legislature, the proposed amendment. It is just, it is humane, it is right, and this is a fit occasion to speak out to the world upon a question of such magnitude, and the whole civilized world will joyously ratify the deed."

Upon receipt of this message, the senate suspended the rules and a joint resolution for ratification was adopted by a vote of 18 to 6, several Democrats not voting. The house of representatives concurred by a vote of 48 to 28, and thus it came about that

Illinois was the first state in the Union to give its sanction to the act which secured the constitutional abolition of slavery. Mr. Oglesby had the satisfaction of telegraphing to Mr. Lincoln the glad news that "Illinois has ratified the constitutional amendment on the same day that it was passed by congress."

The twenty-fourth general assembly adjourned on February 16, after harmoniously passing many diverse and far reaching laws.

Under the stimulus of congenial work and the cheering news of the fall of Richmond and the collapse of the Confederacy, Governor Oglesby rapidly regained his health and mental poise.

President Lincoln, who had dictated the humane terms of the surrender of Lee's army, was very anxious that a like merciful policy should govern the reconstruction of the Union. His theory was that every state was still, and always had been, an integral part of the Union. That we are a nation, one and indivisible, and that the prodigal sons, who had wandered from home and fed on husks, should be received with open arms and fed on a fatted calf; provided that they endorse the new rules and family regulations, that had been established while they were wanderers.

Now there was a goodly number of elder brothers who were angry and would not consent to the feast, therefore Father Abraham called them together to entreat them. Governor Oglesby responded to the call and arrived in Washington on that fatal Good Friday that sounded the death knell of a nation's hope of a peaceful and happy reunion of the divided family.

Upon his arrival at Washington, the governor called as soon as possible at the White House. He arrived just as the President and Mrs. Lincoln were entering their carriage for a drive. He declined an invitation to drive with them. Mrs. Lincoln urged him to go to the theater with them that night, but Governor Oglesby declined on account of the fatigue of his journey. He made an appointment to meet the president the next morning and bade him goodbye for the last time in life.

Governor Oglesby was in bed at his hotel when summoned to

the death bed of his chief. Words fail to tell the tragic story of his grief.

"The heavens were hung in black,  
The earth put mourning on."

The somber shadow of grief which overcast the land at Lincoln's death did not begin to lift until after continuous and imposing funeral ceremonies along the entire route from Washington to Springfield had given the people of the country a chance to honor and mourn the distinguished dead.

On May 11, Governor Oglesby was appointed the president of an association organized to erect a suitable monument to the memory of Mr. Lincoln. Two hundred thousand dollars was raised by contributions from states and territories by soldiers and sailors, Sunday school scholars, churches, benevolent societies and individual admirers of the martyred president. The monument was completed and dedicated October 15, 1874, in the presence of a distinguished concourse of men of all nations. General John M. Palmer presided and Governor Oglesby delivered the oration.

Many laws of importance were enacted during Governor Oglesby's administration. Among them was the location of the Illinois Agricultural and Industrial college at Urbana, and the appropriation of \$450,000 for beginning the erection of a \$3,000,000 state house at Springfield.

Decatur came to the front on the state house question by an offer to donate a beautiful site, (Johns Hill), with ten acres of land and \$1,000,000 in cash for the location of the capital in that city. But munificent as was the offer, it failed to make any decided impression on the legislative mind, and the bill for erecting a new state house at Springfield became a law February 25, 1867.

The second and third years of Governor Oglesby's administration were enlivened by many agreeable social functions and the governor's mansion resumed its position as the seat of gaiety and hospitality, in which Decatur took prominent part. Mrs. Oglesby surrounded herself with an attractive band of young ladies. The governor was always a charming host.

## CHAPTER VII.

### GOVERNOR AND SENATOR.

The last year of Governor Oglesby's term of office was saddened by the long illness and death of his wife. After the birth of her baby boy, Robert, she was a suffering invalid for months during which time her loving husband devoted himself to her care, never leaving her for an hour unless duty called.

Mrs. Anna Oglesby died in the governor's mansion at Springfield, on the 16th day of June, 1868, and was brought to Decatur, where she rests in Greenwood cemetery beside her children.

When Governor Oglesby retired from office he returned to Decatur where for four years he devoted himself to the tender care of his motherless children and to the recuperation of his finances, which had suffered sadly during the long years of his official life.

During the four years of his retirement, the Republican party, which had been a unit only on the one absorbing question of slavery, became a seething cauldron of discordant elements. The froth, Socialism, Greenbackism, Know Nothingism and Grangerism, had boiled over and out. There remained two strong intelligent factions that differed greatly on the important issues of the day. Reconstruction, negro suffrage, militaryism, civil service, and finally, the renomination of General Grant, were the causes of a widespread revolt in the ranks of the Republican party. Such prominent, original Republicans as Senator Trumbull, Governor Palmer, Judge David Davis, Leonard Swett and John Wentworth were among the insurgents.

All the "sore heads" and odds and ends of every party or clique in the country opposed to General Grant and the regular Republicans, met in convention at Cincinnati on May 1, 1872, and nominated for president, Horace Greeley, who had always been the most powerful unflinching and uncompromising foe of the Democratic party.

The roaring farce entitled, "The Nomination of Horace Greeley for President of the United States by the Democratic Party," was staged at Baltimore on July 9, 1872. Meanwhile the regular Republicans, apprehensive of the effect of a secession from their ranks so extensive and influential, were seeking for a leader of their forlorn hope.

The prestige, magnetism and eloquence of Oglesby suggested him as the only man who could lead them out of the wilderness. An influential delegation, bearing a petition signed by twenty-two members of the general assembly and other prominent citizens, came to Decatur and persuaded him, much against his will, to accept a second nomination for governor.

As my story is supposed to close with the end of the rebellion, I will give only a synopsis of the remainder of Governor Oglesby's remarkable career.

The campaign which followed was probably the most bitter in the history of American politics. Governor Oglesby was elected by a majority of more than 40,000 over his opponent, Gustavus Koerner, whose popularity with the Germans, it was supposed, would prove a winning factor for the Democrats. He was inaugurated January 13, 1873, and delivered an inaugural address "which gained the approving smiles of his political friends."

Eight days after his inauguration, he was elected to the United States senate by the Twenty-eighth general assembly of Illinois. Soon after his election to the senate, Mr. Oglesby was married to Mrs. Emma Gillett Keys, a very beautiful woman and a daughter of John D. Gillett, the Logan county cattle king.

During his six years in the senate he spent the greater portion of his time in Washington, though he kept his Decatur home open. The old house where he had lived for many years, became one wing of a very handsome new home which he built and occupied after his retirement from official life. Four of his children were born in the new house, all of whom are still living. Richard J. Oglesby and Miss Felicite Oglesby now live in Rome, Italy, with their mother. John is at present Lieutenant Governor of Illinois, and Jasper lives at Oglehurst, Logan county.



For fourteen years Senator Oglesby lived in retirement from office, but not from public life, for his influence and his eloquence were always at the service of his party.

In 1884, he was nominated and elected, for the third time, to the office of governor of Illinois. An interval of twenty years had elapsed between his first and last nominations, which was "a political triumph as creditable to the party to which he had always been steadfast, as it was personally gratifying to him. No other similar instance of gubernatorial preferment can be found in the history of the states."

The record of his first term had been without a stain; his second term ended in his election to a higher office. For fourteen years he had given his services to his party for the advancement of other candidates. "It was asserted in some quarters that he had been relegated to the category of 'back numbers,' but when the Republican convention of 1884 was called, remembering the telling blows he had dealt the opposition in previous campaigns, all eyes were turned to the favorite of 1864, who had never disappointed expectations." He was elected over Carter Harrison, the Democratic nominee, by a majority of 15,000.

Governor Oglesby retired from his third term as governor of Illinois on January 14, 1889. No better commentary on his administration can be made than that uttered by his successor, Governor Fifer, in his inaugural address:

For more than a third of a century, Richard Oglesby has been prominent in the civic and military history of Illinois. In all that time no call of patriotic duty remained unheeded; no cause, embracing the public weal, found him a laggard. In war his heroic breast stood a bulwark between the great Republic and her enemies. To cement the union of the Fathers he shed his blood. As a member of the national senate, and as governor of this commonwealth, to which office he has received the rare compliment of three elections, he proved himself well able, by wise statesmanship, to preserve in council what his intrepid valor helped him to win in the field.

Strong in attachment to party, and living in times of strife, his career yet exemplifies the maxim that "He serves his party best who serves his country best." Retiring voluntarily from the scenes of his public labors and triumphs, he goes from us crowned with honor, followed by the gratitude and affection of his fellow citizens.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A TASK UNFINISHED FOR DECATUR

When Mr. Oglesby left the Governor's mansion in Springfield on January 1, 1889, circumstances beyond his control compelled him to leave his loved Decatur home and take up his residence in Logan county, where he led for ten years a life of comparative retirement at Oglehurst, his new home.

He was only sixty-four years old, but had lived at a time when one year counts as a score in an ordinary life. He had carried in his body for twenty-seven years the bullet fired at Corinth, and for twenty-seven years had never ceased to suffer from the wound. He was an old man, old before his time through service and through suffering.

Sometimes during these last ten years of his life upon some inspiring occasion, he would break forth into a speech of such surpassing eloquence as seemed almost inspired. On the night of September 9, 1894, he made one of these impromptu speeches at a "Harvest Home" banquet, given by the famous Fellowship Club of Chicago. That speech was not stenographically reported, but Volney W. Foster, who was present, whose memory was considered phenomenal, was so impressed that later he volunteered to write the talk out from memory. His version was submitted to Franklin Head and others who were present, and was pronounced "*verbatim et literatum*." I quote from a copy of the oration as published and sent, in memoriam, to some of her friends by Mrs. Oglesby.

Ex-Governor Oglesby was seated at the speakers' table at the south end of the room, between Joseph Jefferson and Conan Doyle, with whom he had been in earnest conversation up to the moment of the call of his name. The toastmaster was Mr. Franklin H. Head, and the toast that he gave to each speaker was "What I Know About Farming."

The Governor arose slowly and was seemingly waiting for

an inspiration. He looked deliberately upon the harvest decorations of the room and finally his eyes seemed to rest upon the magnificent stocks of corn that adorned the walls. He then slowly and impressively said:

The corn, the corn, the corn! That in its first beginning and its growth has furnished aptest illustration of the tragic announcement of the chieftest hope of man. If he die, he shall surely live again. Planted in the friendly but somber bosom of the mother earth it dies. Yea, it dies the second death, surrendering up each trace of form and earthly shape until the outward tide is stopped by the reacting vital germ which, breaking all the bonds and cerements of its sad decline, comes bounding, laughing into life and light, the fittest of all the symbols that make certain promise of the fate of man.

And so it died and then it lived again. And so my people died. By some unknown, uncertain and unfriendly fate, I found myself making my first journey into life from conditions as lowly as these surrounding that awakening, dying, living infant germ. It was in those days when I, a simple boy had wandered from Indiana to Springfield, that I there met the father of this good man (Joseph Jefferson), whose kind and gentle words to me were as water to a thirsty soul, as the shadow of a rock to a weary man. I loved his father then, I love the son now. Two full generations have been taught by his gentleness and smiles, and tears have quickly answered to the command of his artistic mind. Long may he live to make us laugh and cry, and cry and laugh by turns as he may choose to move us.

But now again my mind turns to the glorious corn. See it! Look on its ripening waving field. See how it wears a crown, prouder than monarch ever wore, sometimes jauntily and sometimes, after the storm, the dignified survivors of the tempest seem to view a field of slaughter and to pity a fallen foe. And see the pendant caskets of the corn field with the wine of life and see the silken fringes that set a form for fashion and for art.

And now the evening comes and something of a time to rest and listen. The scudding clouds conceal the half and then reveal the whole of the moonlit beauty of the night, and then the gentle winds make heavenly harmonies on a thousand harps that hang upon the borders and the edges and the middle of the field of ripening corn until my very heart seems to beat responsive to the rising and the falling of the long melodious refrain. The melancholy clouds sometimes make shadows on the field and hide its aureate wealth and now they move and slowly into sight there comes the golden glow of promise for an industrious land. Glorious corn, that more than all the sisters of the field, wears tropic garments. Nor on the shore of Nilus or of Ind does nature dress her forms more splendidly.

My God, to live again that time when for me half the world was good and the other half unknown! And now again, the corn, that in its kernel holds the strength that shall (in the body of the man refreshed) subdue the forest and compel response from every stubborn field, or, shining in the eye of beauty, make blossoms of her cheeks and jewels of her lips and thus make for man the greatest inspiration to well doing, the hope of companionship of that sacred, warm and well-embodied soul, a woman.

Aye, the corn, the royal corn, within whose yellow heart there is of health and strength for all the nations. The corn triumphant, that with the aid of man hath made victorious procession across the tufted plain and laid foundation for the social excellence that is and is to be. This glorious plant transmuted by the alchemy of God sustains the warrior in battle, the

poet in song, and strengthens everywhere the thousand arms that work the purposes of life.

Oh, that I had the voice of song or skill to translate into tones the harmonies, the symphonies and oratorios that roll across my soul, when standing sometimes by day and sometimes by night upon the borders of this verdant sea, I note a world of promise, and then before one-half the year is gone I view its full fruition and see its heaped gold await the need of man. Majestic, fruitful, wondrous plant! Thou greatest among the manifestations of the wisdom and love of God, that may be seen in all the fields or upon the hillsides or in the valleys.

The merrymaking was hushed, the audience sat spellbound. As the orator reached the climax of his oration, by common impulse the banqueters were brought to their feet in almost awesome adoration for the man. When he closed and slowly took his seat, there was a moment's silence and then deafening cheers rang through the room.

Only one who has heard and seen Oglesby in his inspired moments can appreciate this "gem of literary brilliancy, a classic in thought and inspiration."

On April 4, 1899, the news was flashed to Decatur that Richard Oglesby was dead. He had been stricken with vertigo at his home, had fallen and struck his head, causing concussion of the brain. He did not regain consciousness and died peacefully about an hour after the accident.

I will draw a veil over the sad funeral services which occurred at Oglehurst and in the Gillett chapel at Elkhart where his body lies buried.

Governor Oglesby was one of those rare beings, a prophet honored in life by his own people, and who in death should not be forgotten.

There is, not far from the entrance to Greenwood cemetery in Decatur, a beautiful lot, curbed with concrete dilapidated and neglected, where lie buried the wife of Oglesby's youth, two of his children and his closest friend, Sheridan Wait, where I hope

Decatur will sometime honor herself by building on the foundation, built by himself, a monument:

IN MEMORY OF  
DECATUR'S MOST DISTINGUISHED  
AND BEST BELOVED CITIZEN,  
RICHARD J. OGLESBY,  
MAJOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY,  
UNITED STATES SENATOR AND  
THREE TIMES GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS.

## FOUR OTHER DECATUR GENERALS



### CHAPTER IX.

#### GENERAL ISAAC C. PUGH.

General Isaac C. Pugh, one of Decatur's earliest settlers and most prominent citizens, was a hero of three wars. His first experience as a soldier was when he enlisted April 23, 1832, for service in the Black Hawk war, in James Johnson's company of Illinois militia, which was attached to the Fifth regiment of the Illinois Mounted Volunteers. He was second lieutenant of his company and his term of enlistment was thirty-five days. Though the time was short, it was full of adventure and Mr. Pugh came out of the war with a bullet hole in his hat brim and a captain's commission.

The recruits had armed themselves, they were without discipline and made a rather sorry display of soldierly courage. The account of the first battle in which young Pugh participated, I give in his own words:

We were camped at Dixon's Ferry waiting for provisions, when Stillman swore that he could whip the Indians with his brigade of 275 men and refused to wait for reinforcements. So we left Dixon's Ferry and traveled north up the river some distance and went into camp.

Some time after, three Indians came to the camp bearing a flag of truce. Shortly after they came, some one fired a gun and one of the Indians fell dead, the other two escaping. Why the shot was fired I never knew.

Stillman ordered all to mount, which we did, and started towards Black Hawk's camp at Sycamore creek. We had proceeded but a short distance when we saw five more Indians bearing a flag of truce. In place of Stillman respecting the flag of truce, as I would have done, he ordered a charge on the Indians, who turned their horses and fled toward Black Hawk's camp. Two of the Indians were shot and killed and the others were pursued by the entire troop without any regard to caution.

The three Indians passed the camp of Black Hawk, who was at that time in ambush near the road. A number of the men led by Stillman, had passed the ambush when the Indians arose, fired a volley, raised the terrible



war whoop, and the men never even stopped at their camp to get their things. I didn't see any more of Stillman until we got to Dixon's Ferry.

A little after midnight one of Stillman's men came into camp, his horse in a lather of sweat, and said that there were 2,000 Indians in the battle and that he was the only one who had escaped their bullets and tomahawks. Soon after, others came straggling in and a little after daylight all were in, excepting fifty whom we thought of course had been killed. We learned afterwards that a number had not stopped running until they reached their homes.

In the Mexican war Pugh went out as captain of Company C, Fourth Illinois, of which R. J. Oglesby was first lieutenant. The Fourth regiment participated in the capture of Vera Cruz, and three weeks later in the battle of Cerro Gordo. The regiment was in the front of this battle. Company C had forty-eight men in this fight, two of whom were killed and ten wounded. At this battle Company C had the distinction of capturing Santa Anna's carriage containing his cork leg and \$25,000 in silver.

Isaac C. Pugh commanded the regiment in this battle and Robert Wornick, of Blue Mound, one of the few survivors of the company and himself a veteran of two wars, says that Colonel Pugh's leading the regiment in a charge at Cerro Gordo was one of the most conspicuous acts of reckless daring that he ever knew.

About a month after the battle of Cerro Gordo the enlistment of the Fourth regiment expired and the men returned home by way of New Orleans and St. Louis.

Captain Pugh returned to Decatur and to his farm of eighty acres, north of the city, all of which is now within the city limits. His time was divided between farming and office holding. There is probably no one in the history of Decatur who was so often elected to office by his fellow citizens.

He came here in 1828, the year Macon county was organized, and was elected to office within a year. He was a member of the commissioners court, master in chancery, county assessor, county treasurer, county clerk, member of the general assembly of Illinois and postmaster and mayor of Decatur. Some of these offices he held for several terms. According to the county records, he was master in chancery and county treasurer at the same time, holding the former office for a period of seven years and the latter for four.

In the Civil war, I. C. Pugh entered the service as captain of Company A of the Eighth regiment. The date of his enlistment was April 23, 1861. This regiment was enlisted for three months' service, Colonel R. J. Oglesby commanding. It was stationed at Cairo, Ill., till the close of its term, when it was reorganized for three years. Pugh left the regiment and returned to Decatur, where he organized the Forty-first regiment of which he was appointed colonel.

The Forty-first was engaged in the battle of Shiloh, April 6 and 7, 1862. It later took part in the siege of Corinth, the battle of Coldwater, and the siege of Vicksburg. The regiment was finally consolidated with the Fifty-first. Colonel Pugh was advanced to the rank of brigadier general for meritorious conduct and was mustered out of the service, August 20, 1864.

In the three wars in which General Pugh took part, it happened that he had a hand in some of the hottest fighting that marked each of them. Stillman's run in the Black Hawk war, Cerro Gordo in the Mexican war and Pittsburg Landing in the Civil war furnished all of the active fighting that the most enthusiastic soldier would care to see. In the last two it is authoritatively stated that General Pugh was conspicuous for his bravery, and in the first there is no definite record except that the officers tried to stay the panic of their men. In not one of these engagements did he get a scratch. In the battle of Shiloh the cape of his overcoat was pierced by bullets and another tore across his breast, cutting through his clothing without touching him.

A permanent monument to General Pugh in Decatur is the Pugh school. Pugh street was named for him because it was the road which marked the southern boundary of General Pugh's farm, but that street's name has lately been changed to Grand avenue. The Pugh school was named in honor of the former distinguished citizen of the city, and it is worth emphasizing here that it is not the "Pugh Street School," but the Pugh School.

General Pugh was born in Christian county, Kentucky, in 1805, and came to Decatur in 1828, where he resided continuously for forty-six years. August 2, 1831, he married Elvira E. Gorin, a sister of Jerome Gorin. Of their eleven children, five died in in-

fancy. Three members of General Pugh's family are still living, Mrs. Martha J. Lowery, Mrs. John Mark, of Washington, D. C., and William H. Pugh, of Seattle, Wash.

Mrs. Lowery was born while her father was in the Black Hawk war. In her home hangs a gold mounted sword which was presented her father in acknowledgement of his distinguished services in the Civil war, by the members of his regiment. There are not many left of the old friends who admired and loved General Pugh, but his name will always be honored by the people of Decatur.

### GENERAL GUSTAVUS A. SMITH.

Gustavus A. Smith was the youngest of three brothers who were prominent and influential citizens of early Decatur. Mr. Smith was a carriage maker and probably owned the only manufacturing establishment in Decatur that exported any of its products previous to 1860.

Mr. David Shellabarger tells me that in 1858 Mr. Smith was employing about twenty men, and occupying a large frame building on the corner of West Main and Church streets as a carriage shop. Part of Caldwell's livery stable now standing was the blacksmith shop of the establishment and the old Methodist church was used for a finishing and drying room. Mr. Shellabarger says that the carriages were "first-class and very handsome."

He asked Mr. Smith where he found a market for them. "We can sell all we can make to rich planters down south and get good prices for them," was the reply. In 1860 Southern repudiation of northern debts brought disaster to the carriage manufactory and financial ruin to Mr. Smith.

On the third day of July, 1861, the Thirty-first regiment, Illinois infantry, was reorganized in Decatur and on the 23rd was accepted by the Secretary of War "as Colonel G. A. Smith's Independent Regiment, Illinois Volunteers."

The regiment left Decatur August 4 and joined General Sigel's army at Sedalia on the 26th. For seven months they were in al-

most constant action, skirmishing every day in the endeavor to drive Price's rebel army out of Missouri.

At the battle of Pea Ridge on March 8, 1862, Colonel Smith was severely wounded so he was carried from the field of battle and reported as mortally injured, but his strong vitality and a skillful surgical operation saved his life. His skull was badly crushed and trepanning was successfully resorted to. A silver plate about as large as a dollar replaced the missing bone. He was almost bald, and the silver plate was very much in evidence after that in Decatur, and he was always rather proud of being called "old tin top" by the boys. Though only eight months in active service, he had rendered such gallant service, that on September 19 President Lincoln promoted him to Brigadier General.

General Smith never sufficiently recovered from his wound to go into active service again, and was discharged on September 22, 1862.

In 1864 President Lincoln appointed him internal revenue collector for New Mexico and he at once removed with his family from Decatur to Santa Fe, where he died some years later.

Mr. Henry Martin tells me that when the Seventh Illinois cavalry were in the vicinity of Courtland and Decatur, Alabama, they found all the livery stables and many of the planters' homes equipped with fine carriages and buggies, marked on the rear axle, "Gustavus A. Smith, Decatur, Illinois." "The boys claimed that they had never been paid for and so we confiscated them," said Mr. Martin.

Though it has been forty-eight years since General Smith left Decatur to serve his country in other fields, Decatur claims him as one of the five men whom Mr. Lincoln honored with commissions as Generals in the United States Army.

### GENERAL JESSE HINES MOORE

General Moore was a native of Illinois, born in St. Clair county April 22, 1817. The family seem to have had a taste for military life, his grandfather having been present at the surrender of

Cornwallis at Yorktown, and his father and two uncles doing good service in the war of 1812.

General Moore was a graduate of McKendree College. He taught school for some years and in 1856 was president of Quincy College.

In 1846 he entered the ministry of the Methodist church as a member of the Illinois Conference. He was an orator of marked ability and was in great demand for special occasions. Those were the days when a Methodist minister served only one year as a pastor of a church, and Mr. Moore formed a wide acquaintance and acquired great popularity as a circuit preacher. He was living in Decatur in 1862 and his patriotic addresses made him a very popular man, especially with the young students in the Methodist colleges.

It was not a very difficult matter for General Moore's friends to convince him that he could serve his God and his church better as colonel of a regiment of soldiers, fighting for their country, than as pastor of a church. His wide acquaintance in the church soon induced squads of volunteers who were enlisting from eight of the neighboring counties to consolidate under his leadership, and the One Hundred and Fifteenth Regiment Illinois Volunteers became known as the Second Methodist Regiment, with the Rev. Jesse H. Moore, "the fighting parson," as colonel.

Companies E and F were enlisted from Macon county. The several companies assembled at Camp Butler, and having elected their own officers, on the 26th day of August elected their regimental officers, were mustered in, and received their commissions.

This regiment was one of the few in the army that was brought together by community of interests and of tastes. They were selected men, drawn together by congeniality, each company having in its composition much that was common to all the others. In nationality it was almost exclusively American. They were men of education and character and among the best in their several communities.

The One Hundred and Fifteenth regiment was assigned to the Army of Kentucky and entered at once on active duty. Their first service was in the blue grass region of Kentucky, where



they were kept constantly on the alert, by rumors of Morgan raids.

It required very tactful management of his men by Colonel Moore, who was in command of the post, to keep the peace between the Union men whose slaves occasionally escaped and reported within the army lines, and his freedom loving soldiers. The owners of the plantations, who were loyal to the government as long as their plantations were protected, and their runaway slaves returned to them by military authority, often became very insulting and overbearing in their demands for the right to search the camp, and sometimes even the officers' tents, for their "missing niggers."

A challenge to a duel resulted from one of these encounters. Colonel Moore settled the difficulty by putting the challenged officer on duty, which precluded his absence from camp for several days, thus avoiding offence to either party.

Though Colonel Moore was a strict disciplinarian, he preserved order and the respect of his men more by tactful management, than by official authority. The ability he had shown in the management of young people in college was now turned to good account in the training of men for military service. His courage and ability were shown and recognized in every battle and his faithfulness to duty and untiring devotion to the welfare of his regiment was manifest in every campaign. In the battle of Chickamauga, he fearlessly led his regiment in the repeated assault on the famous Snodgrass Hill, where his horse was twice shot from under him.

In that famous battle, the One Hundred and Fifteenth after having exhausted their ammunition, drove the enemy from the crest of the hill by a fierce bayonet charge led by Colonel Moore. The gallantry and efficiency of that charge has been recognized by



the United States Government by the erection on Snodgrass Hill of a monument, inscribed

ILLINOIS  
115TH INFANTRY  
FIRST BRIGADE, WHITAKER  
FIRST DIVISION, STEDMAN  
RESERVE CORPS, GRANGER.

General Moore commanded the "Iron Brigade" of the Fourth army corps, from the battle of Nashville, till the regiment was mustered out in June, 1865, and well earned the rank of brigadier given him by President Lincoln in April, 1865, "for gallant and meritorious conduct on the field of battle."

At Resaca, Ga., on, or about June 24, 1864, there was presented to Colonel Moore, by the officers and enlisted men of his regiment, a beautiful and handsomely engraved sword, in recognition of faithful and efficient service as an officer, and as a token of their love, regard and esteem.

The sword has two scabbords, one a service scabbord, with its belt, the other a "dress" scabbard and sword sash. On the side of the gold dress scabbord is engraved

Presented to  
Colonel Jesse H. Moore, 115th Illinois Infantry,  
by the Officers and Enlisted Men  
of his Regiment.

and on the other side, the names of the battles in which Colonel Moore had led his regiment.

McAffee Church  
Wahatchie

Chickamauga  
Dalton

Resaca.

The sword was purchased by Major F. L. Hays, in New York City, while he was en route to Washington to assume his duties and responsibilities as a paymaster of troops in the Union army.

Major Hays sent the sword to Resaca by express, and it was presented to the colonel at the time already stated.

After General Moore's death, the sword was given to his son, Rear Admiral C. B. T. Moore, and is still in his keeping.

After the war General Moore resumed his duties as a Methodist preacher, and was presiding elder of the Decatur district from 1865 to 1868. In 1868 he was elected to Congress from the seventh Illinois district, and re-elected in 1870. He was chairman of the committee on pensions in the 42d Congress. In 1873 he was appointed United States pension agent at Springfield, which office he held for four years. In 1881 he was appointed by President Garfield United States consul to Callao, Peru. He filled that post until his death on July 11, 1883.

Yellow fever was epidemic in Callao and General Moore fell a victim to the fell disease. He was temporarily buried at Callao, but "in 1885, his body was transferred by the United States government, to his home in Decatur where all that is mortal of the Christian soldier and gentleman who once commanded the 'Iron Brigade,' lies in Greenwood Cemetery, quietly awaiting the final reveille."

#### GENERAL HERMANN LIEB.

To Mrs. Hermann Lieb, who is now residing in Chicago, I am indebted for the following biography of her husband:

"General Hermann Lieb was born at Chateau Hardt, Ermalingen Sur le Lac de Constanie, Switzerland, May 24, 1826. His father amassed a fortune in Russia where he introduced the manufacture of cotton prints, in 1822, under the patronage of Czar Alexander, who furnished six hundred crown serfs as workmen in the industry and granted him the use of the winter palace of Queen Catherine as a factory.

"Hermann Lieb was educated in Zurich and at a French school at Vevey. At the age of nineteen he went into business in France, and at the breaking out of a revolution he enlisted in the "Guard Mobile," serving until Louis Napoleon was elected president.

"In 1852 he emigrated to America and in 1856 he came to Decatur where he began the study of law in Colonel Blood's office.

On April 16, 1861, he enlisted as a private in Company B, Eighth regiment, Illinois volunteers.

"Young Lieb, being familiar with European tactics, was asked by Colonel Oglesby to assist in bringing the men of two or three companies under the necessary army drill. He succeeded so well that when three months had elapsed and the men had reenlisted, he was chosen captain of Company B. In October, 1862, he was appointed major of the Eighth Illinois infantry and in April, 1863, was made Colonel of the Fifth U. S. Heavy Artillery (colored). In March, 1865, he was appointed brigadier general, by brevet, for gallant and meritorious services during the war."

In an open letter from General Lieb, addressed to the Honorable Charles Francis Adams, in reply to an article on "The Negro," published in *The Century Magazine* for May, 1906, he tells his own story of the formation of the negro brigade, of which he was commander:

In the early part of 1863 the main portion of General Grant's army for the reduction of Vicksburg was camped about twenty miles above that stronghold on the Louisiana side of the river, at a place called Milliken's Bend. Some time in April, General Lorenzo Thomas, adjutant general of the U. S. army, arrived at the Bend with orders from President Lincoln for the organization of colored troops.

The outlook for such an innovation was not propitious by any means. The sentiment all through the army was much like that expressed by you in the *Century*, and if that sentiment did not manifest itself conspicuously it was due to General Thomas's threat that opposition to the president's policy by any officer, high or low, would be visited by immediate dismissal.

Being as far from racial prejudice then as now, and heartily in sympathy with the president's order and eager to demonstrate that all the clamor raised about the "d— Nigger" was based upon the most stupid prejudices, I resigned my position of major in the Eighth Illinois Infantry and accepted the colonelcy of one of these regiments.

No difficulty was encountered in securing the necessary number of officers, but colored recruits were scarce; and as the army was moving to the front, most of the available negroes had been enlisted in the pontoonier corps. Also, as two other regiments were being organized, the prospect of completing my own was not encouraging.

Under the circumstances, I obtained permission, accompanied by two of my officers, to follow in the wake of the army, moving up within ten miles east of Grand Gulf, some fifteen miles below Vicksburg. Meeting with my old friend, General John D. Stevenson, commanding the Third Brigade of General Logan's division, of which my former regiment, the Eighth Illinois, formed part, I told him that recruiting negroes was my object.

"The devil," he replied in disgust. "We shall have a fight in a day or two. You've just come in time to take charge of the skirmishers of my brigade. Your officers can do the recruiting."

I readily assented provided permission from General Grant could be obtained. That was easily procured. Sure enough, two days later the battle of Raymond was fought. There, and in all succeeding engagements, at Jackson, Champion's Hill, on to the assault on Vicksburg on the 22d day of May, I had charge of the skirmishers. The day after that unsuccessful attempt I returned to my command at Milliken's Bend.

My two officers had done splendidly; my regiment now numbered some 350 able-bodied colored men, while the two other regiments had done as well, bringing the total force to some 1,100 men, of which as senior officer present I assumed command. Our armament consisted of very indifferent Australian muskets, but the officers, with untiring zeal, had brought the recruits, all of them raw plantation hands, to an efficiency in four and six weeks' drill which could not have been surpassed by white recruits.

On the 7th of June we were attacked by about 2,500 Texas Rangers and 200 cavalry under the command of the Confederate General McCulloch—"General Taylor's army"—which ended, after an unprecedented slaughter, with the enemy repulsed, our loss being twelve officers and ninety men killed and seventeen officers and 268 men wounded—the highest percentage of loss in battle on record.

In his official report of that battle the Confederate commander, McCulloch, says: "The line was formed under a heavy fire from the enemy, my troops charging the breastworks. This charge was resisted with obstinacy by the negro portion of the enemy's forces, while the white portion ran like whipped curs almost as soon as the charge was ordered." In this latter stricture McCulloch probably meant a detachment of white cavalry, as an Iowa regiment was sent to our assistance and did good service. But that battle has gone into history and the question, "Will the Negro Fight?" was then and there settled for good.

Having been wounded, I obtained leave and went north.

Upon my return early in July I found orders from General Grant to report at headquarters. Boarding the same steamer that brought me down, I met the general next day. He received me very cordially and effusively complimented the officers and men for the gallantry they had displayed at the Bend, finally instructing me to reorganize my regiment into one of heavy artillery for the defense of Vicksburg. A steamboat was placed at my disposal to proceed to Natchez, where a large camp of negro contrabands offered a splendid opportunity for recruiting the regiment to the full standard of 1,800 men. I secured about 500 volunteers whom I took to Vicksburg. The remnant of the Ninth Louisiana Infantry at Milliken's Bend was added, and the new organization, under the designation of Fifth United States Heavy Artillery, colored, I promptly took in hand.

While the new line of fortifications around Vicksburg was being erected by my force, under General Grant's chief engineer, I was looking out for an additional supply of colored recruits for the complement of the regiment. I was informed that General Sherman, who had pursued the Confederate forces about Jackson into Alabama, was expected to return to Vicksburg with a great number of contrabands. General McPherson insisted I should have the pick.

Their arrival caused a general turnout of citizens and garrison through which the endless cortege passed. Such a sight was never seen since the exodus of the Jew from Egypt. Hundreds of vehicles of the most varied description, from the mule cart to the family equipage of their former masters, loaded promiscuously with women and children, household and kitchen furniture, while their male protectors, not so naked as you saw them in

Omdurman, but just as dirty and uncivilized, marched in file on both sides of the caravan. In apparel they presented a most laughable spectacle, the majority in bedraggled plantation clothing, some with boots, some in shoes, most barefoot, in parts of Confederate and Union uniforms, a few here and there with stovepipe hats, caps or colored handkerchiefs on their heads; in short, the whole cavalcade could not better be characterized than by calling them a lot of black savages returning from a pilfering expedition.

From this motley crew the army surgeons selected a sufficient number of recruits to fill my regiment to the full quota. After a bath in the Mississippi with a scrubbing with brush and soap, and after shearing off their braided curls, they were given their military outfits and enrolled in one of the twelve companies. Clad in Uncle Sam's uniform, their physical appearance was all the most critical could wish, and after a few weeks' drill, the company officers were unanimous in their opinion that never had they met with a body of white recruits more willing and more amenable to military discipline than these lately collected half-savages from Alabama. They all had heard of the fine conduct of their comrades at Milliken's Bend, and now met their white brothers in arms with the proud feeling of equality.

But to make out of this material an effective military force was not the end of my aims. They had enlisted for three years, at the end of which time they would be thrown out into the more or less prejudiced world, to stand upon their own feet. I felt that I was upon trial as much as these half-civilized recruits. After a consultation with my officers I resolved to impart to all of these negroes as much elementary education as would be required for a discriminating American citizenship. A number of carpenters were selected from among them to erect a commodious school house; through the aid of the commanding general of the post of Vicksburg a bevy of school ma'ams was secured from the north; the chaplain was charged with the superintendency, and shortly all the school rooms were in full operation.

In addition I wish to state that with aid of a German band master, I organized a brass band of musicians, the proficiency of which challenged the admiration of all privileged to hear it—the army inspectors from Washington included.

I was convinced that it would be of great use if this finely drilled regiment could be kept in the service, as I believed the army is a civilizer. With this view in mind, I went to Washington shortly before our muster out and saw General Grant, then acting secretary of war. "I agree with all you say," said the general. "I know all about your regiment; but it would require an act of congress." And so my splendid regiment broke up and turned to the task of earning a living for which they had been fairly prepared.

H. LIEB.

It would be difficult to estimate the courage demanded for enlistment as an officer of a colored regiment. Not only would he be subject to death by torture if captured by the Confederates, but his brother officers in the Union army viewed him with scorn. Yet General Lieb not only led his colored troops to glorious victory in war, but secured for himself and them the respect and admiration of the nation.

After the close of the war, General Lieb went to Springfield



and, upon the advice of Governor Oglesby, started a newspaper published in German. In 1868, he moved his paper to Chicago where he published it until 1892.

He married Miss Sarah Stevens, of Orange, N. J. His family numbered four sons, two of whom died in youth.

The general died on March 5, 1908, at the Augustana hospital in Chicago, of injuries resulting from a fall.

He was a man of wide culture, having published in English, "The Life of Emperor William I," "The French Revolution, From 1789 to 1793," and an exhaustive compilation on the effects of the tariff on the growth of the United States.



# THE CIVIL WAR

"Ah, never shall the land forget  
How gushed the life blood of her brave,  
Gushed warm with hope and courage, yet  
Upon the soil they sought to save."



## CHAPTER I.

### FLAG HAD NEW MEANING.

On that solemn Sunday morning of April 14, 1861, when it was announced in ten thousand churches that Fort Sumpter had surrendered and the Stars and Stripes lowered from its battlements, patriotism was born, and the flag of the Union baptized as its sacred symbol.

South Carolina had fired the first gun of the rebellion and its echoing reverberations aroused the nation to a fury of indignation. A rebellious son had struck his indulgent mother in the face, and anger and horror had turned brotherly love into bitterest hate.

On that day the Stars and Stripes took on a new significance. Our flag was no longer a mere thing of beauty. It was the holy emblem of a nation, one and indivisible, from which no member could be rent without the destruction of the whole, and it sprang spontaneously from every church steeple and public building; floated from the windows of private houses, and its colors adorned the breasts of men, women and children.

Monday dawned. The president of the United States issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers "to protect the property of the government, to subdue combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, and

to cause the laws to be duly executed." The gage of battle had been thrown, the first blow struck, and the issue of dread war was fairly met.

The proclamation was like the first peal of a surcharged thunder cloud that cleared the air of doubt and indecision. Patriotism became a devouring flame that obliterated party lines. Men were no longer Democrats or Republicans; they were Americans. The flag, our flag, became the idol of the people.

On Sunday afternoon every available flag in town had been routed from its hiding place and floated to the breeze. Monday morning the stores were besieged for red, white and blue, until every yard of material that could in any manner be converted into an emblem of patriotism was exhausted, and then every printing press in town was pressed into service in printing yard after yard of white muslin into flags. Women gathered together in convenient places to cut these bolts of printed flags into individual decorations and they were given to every passerby.

It soon became unsafe to be seen without this emblem of the new birth. Men were roughly handled who refused to wear an offered flag. There were, however, very few such men in evidence, for traitors, if such there were, were sulking in their hiding places.

In less than an hour after President Lincoln had issued his proclamation of war Governor Yates had supplemented it with a call for six regiments of volunteers (the quota assigned Illinois by the secretary of war), and Decatur rushed to the front in an endeavor to tender the governor the first organized company enlisted in the state. Captain John Post opened a recruiting office in Powers hall, and was soon swearing in his men, almost as fast as they could write their names. The next morning Captain I. N. Martin's company was enlisting at the court house, and before night, on the sixteenth of April, Decatur's two full companies of one hundred men each, had been sworn in and their officers properly elected.

The first name entered on the roll of honor was that of ————, the second was William F. Martin (Comrade), who has for years been honored as the official color bearer of the

Grand Army of the Republic and has carried the flag at the head of all processions at national and state encampments. Comrade Martin's worship of the flag has become almost a mania, and he never allows any occasion of moment to pass without the Stars and Stripes being in evidence at the head of the procession.

The two Decatur companies were hurried to Springfield, where they constituted Companies A and B of the Eighth Illinois Militia. The other eight companies of the regiment had been recruited, Company C at Charleston; D at Olney and Springfield; E at Peoria; F at Pekin; G at Pittsfield, and Griggsville; H at Vandalia, I at Lawrenceville, and K at Bloomington, taking precedent in the order of their arrival at Springfield.

Richard J. Oglesby, who had resigned his office of state senator and tendered to Governor Yates his "services in any capacity where he could render service," was made colonel.

Ten companies of one hundred men each, fully and properly officered, were mustered in on April 25. The two Decatur companies when they went to Springfield, numbered more than 100 men each. After the regiment was organized the companies were reduced to seventy-five men each. It was a hard thing to deliberately call out men and send them home, so the men were lined up by companies and any who were willing to go home were asked to step forward. Not one moved from the ranks. Then it was decided to choose the men who were to be dismissed by lot, so five men, as they stood in the line, were counted and the sixth dismissed. The dismissed men at once went into some other company.

When it became known that Dick Oglesby was to command the two Decatur companies the enthusiasm and excitement of the people of Decatur knew no bounds. Frank L. Hays was dispatched to St. Louis to buy silk for a "flag for Oglesby's regiment," and many women were soon at work. The flag was made in the parlor of the Revere House and more than a hundred women claimed the privilege of putting some stitches into it. So determined was every woman to have a hand in the work that no one was allowed to finish a star. In some instances each of the

five points was hemmed by a different hand. Greatly envied were the few who knew how to run a sewing machine and thus contribute a long seam to the coveted work.

The Eighth regiment was ordered to Cairo in a very few days and en route stopped in Decatur for the flag presentation. Only the two Decatur companies were allowed to leave the train, where the men were packed like cattle, on platform and freight cars. The Decatur men were "given liberty" for an hour, and as many of them as could passed that hour at their homes. For the rest there had been baskets of good things spread on the grass in the park.

The soldiers were without uniforms but every man wore, strapped to his back, a knapsack, a blanket and a canteen. The canteens were soon filled by the personal friends of the men, each according to his taste. Every wife and sweetheart had brought some gift to add to the burden on her lover's back. Some brought embroidered slippers; one soldier was supplied with a gorgeous dressing gown. A number of girls had sat up nights to make "convenient" toilet cases, which were equipped with clothes brushes and hair brushes, tooth brushes, razors and strops and plenty of perfumed soap and toilet powders, to which they had added a good supply of thread, needles and buttons.

Clean clothes, a warmer coat, another pair of trousers, a dozen new handkerchiefs were some of the things put into the roll of blankets or made to swell the knapsacks to enormous size. No man refused anything, it mattered not how ridiculous or burdensome it was, it was the gift of love to take away the sting of death.

With these varied equipments the men were, at the end of the hour, drawn up on the Water street front of the platform which had been built on the southwest corner of Central park. Preston Butler here took a picture of them, but I am afraid that there is no copy of that picture extant.

An immense crowd filled the park and the streets, a number of representative citizens took their places on the platform and the formalities of the flag presentation took place. "America" was sung, Father Stamper, choked with tears, offered a prayer and Miss Cal Allen made the presentation speech while Miss Hattie

White (Mrs. F. L. Hays) held the staff. Colonel Oglesby responded in a speech of such fervid eloquence that the people simply went wild. Men, women and children shouted and wept and embraced each other frantically.

At last the command was given: "Right about! Face, March!"

No one who witnessed that departure of Decatur's first soldiers will ever forget it.

"Hummel and Wiggins and Nail" with two drums and a fife were the musical escort of the procession. At the solemn tap, tap of the drum, with the new flag carried proudly at their head, the men fell into line and their mothers and sisters, sweethearts and wives fell in beside them and clinging to their arms or marching hand in hand, kept step to the music. More than one soldier carried his baby in his arms, while his wife, holding to his coat sleeve, led other children by the hand——

I cannot write for tears.

## CHAPTER II.

### OUR MEN TO FRONT.

Three months had passed and 75,000 volunteers had not crushed the rebellion. Fierce fires of patriotism that had warmed the hearts of brave women, when they sent their loved ones out to apparent death, had burned to ashes, the little printed flags, their colors washed out by tears, the neglected farm and the hungry child called "father come home."

For the men who, three long months before, had gone out so full of enthusiasm; bad food, bad water, vermin and dirt had made life almost unendurable. They had fought mosquitoes, flies and disease and had conquered—themselves. They had guarded bridges and held the "Knights of the Golden Circle," in check and by their presence had kept the rebel army from invading Illinois, but they had fought no battles and won no glory. Inaction had quelled their enthusiasm and broken their spirit; but when they were asked to re-enlist they never faltered. The life of their country was at stake, demanding renewed sacrifice of comfort, of home, of business, even of life. They had no promise of pay or pension, nothing to tempt them—nothing but patriotism—patriotism which was now put to the crucial test. Grim determination replaced the glow of enthusiasm.

More men must be sent into the field of war; more women must equip themselves to take men's places in the field of labor.

The quota of Illinois was full and, in addition, 10,000 men, already organized and waiting orders but for whose services there had as yet been no call, were begging to be sent to the front. With this "embarrassment of riches" Governor Yates had found it as difficult to select the required number of regiments as had the captains of companies to reduce their ranks from one hundred to seventy-five.

The legislature was in session and came to the governor's re-



lief. A law was enacted authorizing him to "accept the services of one regiment from each congressional district for one month, to be paid by the state, but pledged to go into the service of the United States if there should be further call during their term." It was therefore of first importance that some action should be immediately taken to secure the transfer of these men from the state to the United States service.

At Governor Yates' request a committee of citizens went to Washington early in July to urge upon President Lincoln the immediate mustering in of ten additional Illinois regiments.

Dr. H. C. Johns was one of the men sent on this mission. I make some extracts from his letters home. In the first one, dated Washington, July 16, 1861, he said:

"We find official Washington in a turmoil of doubt and uncertainty, torn to fragments by anxiety and conflicting opinions on vital questions. There is a strong party urging Mr. Lincoln to free and arm the slaves at once. 'Keep the rebels at home to protect themselves and we won't need any more white soldiers,' is their argument. I rather think it wouldn't be a bad idea to set them to killing each other, to save us the trouble.

"The loyal patriots of the border states are yelling, 'keep your hands off the negroes; enforce the law; protect our property.' Then there is an influential crowd of cowards whose cry is 'compromise,' 'conciliate,' 'peace—peace at any price.' In my opinion we will have peace when the lion and lamb lie down together and the terrier pup and rat eat bacon from the same fitch."

On the 18th, he wrote:

"There is not a man in the cabinet who has not believed himself to be a bigger man than Lincoln; but they are fast finding out that they are not dealing with a man of putty. They do not agree among themselves and therefore can't bring very strong pressure to bear on him. He listens patiently to their suggestions, makes a few comments and puts an end to dissensions by telling a story or playing with Tad, who, it is said, he keeps within call as a buffer. The arming of slaves is the only phase of the situation upon which he has expressed himself emphatically. He will

have none of it; he will 'neither encourage rebellion nor insurrection.'"

Two days after the above letter was written the battle of Bull Run, the first pitched battle of the war, settled the question of a big army. The irreconcilable differences of cabinet or congress no longer palsied Mr. Lincoln's hand. He cut the Gordian knot and within a week 300,000 men were called into the field.

Four years of WAR had been inaugurated. In this four years two million three hundred and seventy-five thousand, three hundred and four men enlisted in the Union army. Of these, two hundred and fifty-nine thousand were from Illinois, and Macon county, with a population of thirteen thousand, six hundred and fifty-five, furnished three thousand, three hundred and thirty-one of that number. This was 25 per cent. of the entire population taken from the producing class of citizens, the bone and sinew of the land. They came from the farm and the work shop, the bank and the merchant's counter, the student's den and the laborer's hut. Preachers forsook their pulpits, lawyers their clients and doctors their patients, and sang together, "We are coming, Father Abraham."

The seventy-five per cent. of Macon county's population who did not go were women and children and men too old to do effective military service, but who sent their sons and brothers to the front while with renewed youth and vigor they took their places in the ranks of labor and business.

There were also a few strong men, brave enough to stay at home because they could serve their country better in the field of business than in the field of war. I say "brave enough," because it required bravery to hear the sneers and inuendoes cast upon the courage and patriotism of the men who stayed at home and to resist the tide of enthusiasm which threatened to carry them out on unknown seas seeking honor and glory, while plain common sense bade them stay at home and attend to the humdrum work for which education and experience had fitted them and which duty demanded of them. It was just as essential to the success of the union cause that trade should be carried on, manufactures continued and offices loyally filled and faithfully administered as

it was that armies should be recruited for the struggle in the field. Men like James Millikin, Dr. William A. Barnes, Lowber Burrows, Judge S. F. Greer, E. McClellan, John Ullrich and H. B. Durfee, who gave their time and talent to keep the ball of business enterprise rolling and whose advice, sympathy and money were freely given to aid the soldiers' wives at home or the sick and wounded in the hospitals deserve as much honor as the men who fought the battles of the war.

"The backbone of the Union army was the unfaltering support it received from the loyal people who helped to maintain it, who followed it with their sympathy and aid, who in fact furnished the sinews of war and made its glorious success possible."

Macon county did herself honor not only in the number but in the quality of the men she sent out to do battle for their country. A large proportion of her men acquired distinction and received promotion for gallant service in the army. Decatur, with only six thousand inhabitants, had, at the close of the war, five generals on her roll of honor, Oglesby, Pugh, Smith, Moore and Lieb.

The name of Colonel Nathan W. Tupper ought to be added to this list of Decatur generals for he was in command of a brigade after the battle of Missionary Ridge and would undoubtedly have been formally commissioned general if his untimely death had not prevented.

In the surgical branch of the service Macon county sent out a remarkable number of skilled workers. Eleven physicians forsook lucrative practice at home to serve the sick and wounded in the army.

Drs. S. T. Trowbridge and Charles Dennison went out with the Eighth regiment on April 25, 1861, and both served during the war.

Drs. Ira Curtis and H. C. Johns volunteered after the battle of Fort Donelson and went with Governor Yates to Cairo to help with the wounded who were being sent north from the battlefield.

Dr. Curtis suffered a stroke of paralysis, brought on by over exertion while in charge of an improvised hospital at Mound City. His life was despaired of for many months and he was an invalid

the remainder of his life. Dr. Johns was sent to the battlefield by Governor Yates with instructions to use his discretion on the disposition of the hundreds of wounded men left on the field. He took possession of every available house in the vicinity and improvised hospitals for such of the men as were unable to endure twenty miles of rough roads by wagon before they reached river transportation. Governor Yates gave him a state commission as "surgeon in the field," and he remained in the vicinity of Donelson and Iuka for three months, most of the time taking the place of the surgeon of the Twenty-seventh Illinois, who had been sent home on sick leave. Dr. Johns was afterwards commissioned surgeon of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Illinois in which capacity he served two years.

Dr. William J. Chenoweth was surgeon of the Thirty-fifth and Dr. Enoch W. Moore of the One Hundred and Fifteenth, of which Dr. Nelson G. Blalock was assistant surgeon.

Dr. Ira N. Barnes served as surgeon of the One Hundred and Sixteenth regiment, and Drs. Heckleman and Joseph A. Hostetler as assistants, and all three were mustered out June 7, 1865, serving till the close of the war. William M. Gray was first surgeon of the Forty-first and afterwards of the Sixty-third, but resigned after a short service with each on account of ill health.

Can any county in the United States with no more than thirteen thousand, six hundred and fifty-five inhabitants exceed Macon county's record of three thousand, three hundred and thirty-one volunteers, five generals and eleven surgeons?

### CHAPTER III.

#### BURDENS ON THOSE AT HOME.

In the great upheaval and readjustment of social and political conditions consequent on the civil war, few things had more lasting consequence or greater influence on the future of the nation than the awakening of woman to a realization of her capacity and power in the conduct of affairs. Before 1860, it was the exception, not the rule, for a woman to have any influence over, partnership in, or intelligent knowledge of her husband's business. The husband was the head of the house, paid the bills and held the purse strings. Few women ever had a dollar they could call their own or spend without special permission of the lord of the exchequer, and either cringing economy or careless waste was the almost inevitable result of such irresponsible financiering. The women who earned money were looked upon either with pity or contempt, pity if she must, or contempt if she openly desired to so debase her womanhood.

Teaching, sewing or keeping boarders was legitimate employment for women who were compelled to support themselves, but if one had a husband, father or brother it was a loss of both caste and self respect to openly earn money. As a rule, they were content to be merely domestic animals, giving to the family their strength and ability under the direction of some overlord, husband, brother or business agent, and receiving in return their "keep" and affectionate care.

The transition of the country from peace to war was appalling and swift, but the regeneration of its women kept pace with it. Confronted with responsibilities never before assumed they cast aside timidity and put on strength. Ignorance, inexperience and false pride had made them willing slaves, but the clash of war had rent their bonds, they sprang forth full armed, brave and strong to do battle as best they might for their country. The

new born patriotism of the hour swept them to the loftiest heights of devotion and sacrifice. They sent their husbands, sons, brothers and lovers to the fearful chances of the battlefield and forced their white lips to say a cheerful goodbye while their hearts were nigh breaking with the struggle. The only panacea for such anguish was the mighty power of absorbing work. The farm, the counting house and the office found them taking the places of men who had gone forth to battle.

It was upon the farmer's family that the heaviest burden of labor fell. To the ordinary duties of a farmer's wife were now added the care of the stock as well as the planting and harvesting of crops. The amateur farmer's ignorance of the details of her new profession sometimes led to very ludicrous mistakes. A lady who had contracted to fill the "haymows" in a number of city barns, cut the grass one day and the next morning delivered it as hay, and was much astonished to hear that her customers refused to receive green grass at hay prices. On a farm where there was a number of blooded brood mares with their colts and yearlings, all the hair on the mane and tails of the mares and colts gradually disappeared and all the stock developed a mania for gnawing fence rails and chewing the mangers of their stalls. On application to the "Prairie Farmer" for the cause and remedy, the answer came, "How often do you salt your stock? Your cows and colts have probably eaten the manes and tails of the horses and your fences and mangers have disappeared in lieu of salt."

There had not been a pound of salt fed to the stock on that farm in ten months.

The "Prairie Farmer," published in Chicago, had offered its columns to the women of the west as a medium for the exchange of experiences, and letters of sympathy, advice and condolence were freely exchanged. In my scrap book I find a few of these letters, some extracts from which will illustrate the spirit which actuated the women of '63.

\* \* \* It rains in torrents, has been pitchy dark two hours and the little ones, tired of their merry Christmas play, have gone to bed. The long lone evening must be passed alone. All day, for the children's sake, I have laughed a merry laugh and worn a cheerful smile; yet, even the little ones have seen through the thin guise the sad heart beneath. Alas!



how many a heart is sad today with thoughts of the loved ones exposed to the fearful peril of the battlefield, or perhaps lying on the narrow cot of the hospital with no soft hands to press the aching brow and no kind voice to cheer their joyless Christmas.

The weekly visits of the Prairie Farmer will be looked for with more than usual anxiety in many families during the coming year. Many a wife, left alone to manage the farm, will look anxiously through its columns for instruction and advice in the performance of her unwonted duties. Anxious to perform her part well, unwilling that aught of home interests shall suffer while the husband or father is serving his country in the tented field—the new duties will be performed with fear and trembling, yet with a firm determination that no blades of grass, no spear of grain the less, shall grow because a woman's hand is at the helm.

Will some of you numerous correspondents tell us what will be the probable price of labor per month for good hands? How are we ladies who have to manage the farm, to find out these things. Shall we stand on the street corners with the men and canvass these matters, or must we take Pat's word for it when he comes in with his, "Shure and hands are going to be very scarce and won't be hired this summer for less than \$25 a month." And again, how are we to get hands at all unless we join these same street corner groups, for if we accidentally hear of a good man looking for employment for the summer, before we can find him some man farmer has grabbed him "just a week ago." Would it do any good to advertise in the Farmer or do such men as we want seldom look at a paper.

All the newspapers in the country took a lively interest in the "new departure" in woman's sphere and told many stories of the extraordinary prowess of the "female farmers." The Decatur Magnet of June 16, 1863, tells the following story of local interest:

There is, living near Argenta, a young woman about nineteen years old, who takes the lead in agricultural labor. One of her brothers is in the army, the other has seen service but has been sent home a cripple and the father is also disabled; so she has gone into the field and about three weeks ago covered 1,050 hills of corn in five hours. She was dragging oats the last heard from.

This young woman was no exception. On almost every farm, women were compelled to work in the corn and harvest fields, if crops were raised or garnered.

It was almost impossible to hire men. Negroes might and would have relieved the situation but there existed everywhere intense hostility to the admission of negroes into the community. Thousands of "contrabands" were proving a curse in the vicinity of the army because they were not allowed to come into the free states where their labor could have been made effective.

Political capital was made of any effort to relieve the situation

by employing the negro and a popular Democratic shiboleth was "Keep out the negro."

Almost the only available labor was the few Irishmen who were not employed by the railroads and they were particularly hostile, swearing loudly that "no damned nigger should work in this vicinity." A few good men of color had come to Decatur and were welcomed to the harvest fields by the hard pressed farmers' wives.

I had succeeded in getting my hay cut, but could find no stackers. Three colored men, Stanton Fields, John Bird and George Howard, who had recently arrived in town, reported themselves as willing to do the work and I hired them at \$1.25 a day and board. Then came trouble. The first difficulty occurred when two white men, who were hired at higher wages, refused to work with "niggers," and the next when a gang of "hoodlums," who had "squatted" in the woods near the river, gathered near my house yelling "nigger lover—she eats with niggers. Down with the damned abolitionists!" That evening I received an anonymous letter warning me that my stacks would be burned unless I discharged the negroes.

The postmaster, Mr. John Ryan, who was an Irishman and a Catholic, heard of my trouble and at once called upon the Catholic priest and a few loyal Irishmen to come to my protection. That night an armed guard was placed at the hay stacks and Mr. Ryan sent a trusty man to watch the house. The police were on guard and it was arranged that if at any time in the night a light should appear in the west window of the tower of my home, they would immediately come to my rescue.

The three colored men, who were the principal objects of this persecution, lived for many years in Decatur and were useful and reputable citizens.

Along the river bottoms near Decatur there had appeared, early in 1861 a colony of men who claimed to be refugees from conscription in the south. They built cabins on the banks of the river and claimed to live by fishing and wood cutting, and very soon began to terrorize the neighborhood. They always came to town in gangs, ruthlessly tearing down fences, riding through

fields of grain and shooting recklessly as they went. Next to "niggers" the uniform of a soldier excited their ire.

At one time the Rev. N. M. Baker, chaplain of the One Hundred and Sixteenth regiment, was sent home on official business. Upon his arrival in Decatur he started on foot to visit his mother in Mt. Zion. When near the foot of Johns Hill he met a gang of these reprobates who, on seeing his uniform, followed him calling him every name their unclean vocabulary could invent. Mr. Baker said it was the bitterest pill he ever swallowed.

Dr. Johns at one time came home on sick leave, weak and nervous. He had missed connections at Centralia and came in on a freight train just about dusk. He left the cars at the foot of Prairie street and walked home through the woods. He unfortunately fell in with a number of these drunken "wood rats." His obnoxious uniform was their first ground of attack, but when they recognized him they changed their form of abuse and turned their vile epithets upon his wife and his home. Fortunately he was armed with a six shooting revolver, and although weak, almost to fainting, he turned upon them as he was climbing the fence into his own pasture and fired a volley into their midst and they ran.

These men became so obnoxious that they were soon driven from their lair in the woods by the citizens of the country and compelled to seek refuge in some more congenial community.

One of the most serious difficulties the amateur business woman had to encounter was the scarcity and uncertain value of money. Officers and soldiers left home leaving notes and accounts behind them to be collected for the immediate support of their families. The value of these notes depended upon the price of gold on the day they were paid. A note for \$100, given in payment for a horse and due six months after date, was worth only \$48 the day the note fell due.

Farm hands refused to contract to work except for wages paid on a gold basis. Products could be exchanged at high prices for "shin plaster" of one value in one store and another at another. Almost every business house in Decatur issued "shin plasters" (little pasteboard promises to pay five or ten or twenty-five

cents), which were seldom worth their face value in any other place than the store which had issued them. It took more brains than the average woman had to spare from her other work and worries to untangle the ravelled skein of finance, so she submissively took what she could get and paid what she had to. And she had to pay many prices for a pound of sugar, or for a pound of coffee, if she did not use parched sweet potatoes or rye, flavored with a gummy substance sold her as extract of coffee, as a substitute. Calico cost forty and fifty cents a yard and unbleached muslin was sold at the same price, while shoes, though indispensable, brought fabulous prices.

## CHAPTER IV.

### AID SOCIETY'S BEGINNING.

The summer of '61 was one of intense depression and gloomy foreboding. The disaster of Bull Run, the apparent inactivity of our armies and the exaggerated reports of the preparedness of the enemy had sobered the excited multitude and opened their eyes to the magnitude of the struggle upon which the nation had entered. We learned that other enemies than armed rebels had to be met and conquered; that there was work to do at home as well as upon the battle field.

There had been a great deal of sickness among "our boys" at Cairo and sporadic but ill advised efforts to relieve their suffering had proved of no avail. Entirely unacquainted with the requirements of war or the needs of soldiers, it was inevitable that first movements for army relief should be misdirected.

Individual and neighborhood efforts were made to provide the volunteers with home comforts when well and hospital supplies when sick, but very few of these benefactions ever reached their destination. Indigestible and perishable dainties were packed in boxes with clothing, books, stationery, photographs and toilet articles and sent to Cairo, but before the soldier or surgeon to whom they were addressed could by any possibility claim them, they were unfit for any human use and were fed to the fishes in the Ohio river by wagon loads. Similar conditions all over the country resulted in the organization of the Sanitary Commission with branch societies in almost every city and village.

"In response to a call from the Sanitary Commission of the United States the citizens of Decatur met in the Methodist church on the evening of Nov. 18, 1861, for the purpose of taking into consideration the best method of assisting the sick and wounded in our hospitals. A committee was appointed to report upon the subject at the Baptist church the next day, Nov. 19."

The above paragraph is an extract from the first page of the "secretary's book of the Decatur Soldiers' Aid Society," a type-written copy of which has been placed at my disposal. I have decided to make no attempt to reproduce this book, as its records are so meager that only to a person able, through memory, to read between the lines, does it tell any story. I will therefore use its data to confirm my recollections and tell the story in my own way, quoting frequently from the record.

To a person accustomed to the orderly manner in which women, in these days, conduct public meetings, strictly observing parliamentary rules and without loss of modesty or self respect speaking in public places, the first meeting of the Hospital Aid society would appear almost a roaring farce. Women only had been invited to attend the afternoon meeting at the Baptist church and it is probable that not one of the two hundred who were present had ever "stood up and talked" to an audience. A very few, who were fortunate enough to have been educated under Mary Lyons' advanced system, had received some lessons in parliamentary law, but conventional modesty kept them from making a practical use of their knowledge.

Each woman, as she entered the church, quietly took her seat in the pews and reverently whispered to her neighbor, but not one ventured to "open the meeting." After about an hour of this waiting some one exclaimed aloud: "Hadrn't we better send for Dr. Barnes to tell us what to do?" (Dr. Barnes had presided at the initiatory meeting).

A babel of objections came from all quarters of the room. The women had found their voices and all talked together, each urging some one else to "go up and begin." One woman finally ventured to go to the front and, pounding on the table with a hymn book, called for order, and asked, "Won't some one nominate a chairman for this meeting?"

Dead silence fell upon the audience and the question was repeated. After more whispering and some giggling at the inconsistency of having a *chairman* for a woman's meeting, some one called out, "Oh, Mrs. Johns,—you do it."



"Did I hear a motion that Mrs. Johns take the chair? Is there a second?" Again dead silence.

After more whispering and hunching of elbows, a timid voice at last seconded the motion, and Mrs. Johns took the chair.

"Ladies, what is your pleasure? What is the first thing in order?"

A voice from the rear of the church announced, "I think the first thing to do is to get some red flannel and make some red flannel drawers. They are the healthiest thing a sick man can wear."

The chair suggested that we must first organize, and named Miss Sarah Powers to act as secretary.

Previous to the assembling of the women there had been placed on a table in front of the pulpit a written communication from the committee of men, who had been appointed the evening before to "submit a plan of organization, etc." In this communication the committee "begged leave to submit the following:"

The report named the society "The Sick and Wounded Soldiers' Aid Society of Decatur," and recommended a constitution of seven articles, one of which provided for "the election from the women of the society of a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. These, with three gentlemen, also to be elected by the society, were to constitute an executive committee.

This report was read by the secretary and, without discussion, unanimously adopted. The chair appointed a committee of three to report names to be voted on for an executive committee.

While waiting for the report of the nominating committee an informal talking fest was indulged in. Offers of old linen for lint, old sheets for bandages, pillows, towels, slippers and shirts were freely made, and all kinds of suggestions for making money discussed.

The committee reported the names of:

Mrs. H. C. Johns, president.

Mrs. Lockwood, vice-president.

Mrs. Close, treasurer.

Dr. Barnes, Dr. Johns and Mayor E. O. Smith were named as members of the committee.

These officers were elected by acclamation. "It was voted to hold a festival at Powers Hall on Thanksgiving evening, the proceeds of which should be devoted to relieving the wants of sick and wounded soldiers; a committee of four ladies from each ward was appointed to solicit contributions of pillows, cushions for wounded limbs, socks, yarn for knitting, also money and provisions for the festival, and the meeting adjourned."

The secretary's book minutely records meetings of the executive committee held "at the residences of Mr. A. T. Hill, Mr. S. F. Greer, Dr. Curtis, Mrs. A. A. Powers and Mr. Lockwood." (Observe that the residence was always that of "Mr.——," unless it was the home of a widow).

At the meeting on Nov. 20, "Dr. Barnes was appointed to correspond with the agent of the Sanitary Commission for information;" \* \* \* "Mayor Smith was commissioned to correspond with the surgeons of our different regiments regarding their needs." \* \* \* "Dr. Barnes wrote a notice of the Thanksgiving festival to be published in the city papers by order of the executive committee."

On Nov. 25, "reports from part of the soliciting committees were received." \* \* \* "Dr. Johns brought in two lists of articles needed for hospitals, one from Dr. Trowbridge, of the Eighth, and one from Dr. W. J. Chenoweth, of the Thirty-fifth regiment, Illinois Volunteers." \* \* \* "A committee of three was appointed to meet at —— store on Monday, the 25th to pack such articles as might be sent on for hospitals." \* \* \* "Mayor Smith was authorized to procure a box for the use of the committee."

No mention is made of the festival, which was probably held on the 28th.

On Nov. 30, "A committee of eight *directoresses* was appointed to meet at the Baptist church on Dec. 4, to prepare sewing for ladies, members of the society." \* \* \* "Dr. Barnes was appointed as the person to endorse all bills of indebtedness against the society before they can be paid by the treasurer."

On Dec. 4, "At a meeting of the executive committee with the directoresses (viz. Mrs. Greer, Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. A. A. Powers, Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Cantrell, Mrs. Ryan, Mrs. Hays and Mrs. Eliza Evans) the place of meeting for Friday was changed from the room over Stratton & Hubbards store to the Odd Fellows hall over Millikin & Oder's bank on Bank avenue. It was resolved that the constitution and by-laws of this society should be published. By a majority of the executive committee (at the recommendation of the president) the name of the society was changed from the 'sick and Wounded Soldiers' Aid society' to the Hospital Aid society."

On Dec. 6, the society met in Odd Fellows hall. "Upon the resignation of Miss Sarah Powers, secretary of the society, Mrs. Anna B. Millikin was chosen to that office."

Dec. 9, it was "Resolved to recommend the organization of Hospital Aid societies in townships in which they are not already in operation, also to invite the cooperation of persons or societies in d'fferent townships." It was "Resolved that the executive committee meet every Friday evening in Odd Fellows hall, which will be open from nine in the morning through the day and evening for the use of the society. On motion, it was resolved to solicit the following articles from persons in the county: Flannel for drawers or sheets, hen or goose feathers and skirts of old flannel or linsey."

In response to the above resolutions, societies were organized in Long Creek, Mt. Zion, Wheatland, Harristown, Hickory, Macon, Blue Mound and Illini townships. Through these societies very pleasant social relations were established between town and country, the country people assisting at our entertainments and sending their carriages to take town guests to their suppers, concerts, etc.

Liberal donations were received from the country for almost every shipment made by the parent society. Unfortunately, no record of these contributions has been preserved.

There is no record of meetings held in the month of December (some pages of the book are missing). On January 10, the record reads:

"Odd Fellows hall being considered difficult of access and also a constant expense, and Mr. Greer having kindly tendered his house for the weekly meetings of the society, it was 'Resolved that we meet hereafter at the house of Mr. Greer, immediately west of the Presbyterian church, using the church, by permission, for storing our articles.' "

A sufficient number of articles to fill one box being ready, Monday next was appointed for the packing. The secretary was requested to ask Mayor Smith to procure a box for the purpose. The secretary read a letter from Mr. Gastman, president of the Western Sanitary Commission, giving permission "to send our charities in any direction we may desire."

On Jan. 13, "Hospital stores have been sent to Rolla, Paducah and Cairo."

"The society met on Jan. 17, at the house of Mr. S. F. Greer. The president stated that Mr. William Wert Sykes had proposed through Mr. Mansfield to deliver a lecture for the benefit of the aid society if desired. Terms, ten dollars per lecture which Mr. Mansfield proposes to pay, providing the proceeds arising from its delivery are not sufficient. The excess (should there be any) to be appropriated at the discretion of the society. The meeting adjourned."

"The society met on Jan. 24. On consultation with the president it was decided to be unnecessary for the secretary to notice every meeting of the society, there being frequently no business of importance done."

This was a very unfortunate decision which resulted in the loss of much valuable history.

## CHAPTER V.

### A BIG MONTH'S WORK.

There is no record of meetings held between Jan. 31 and Feb. 28, though the month of February, 1862, was undoubtedly the most eventful in the history of the Decatur Hospital Aid society. On the fifteenth day of that month the battle of Fort Donelson was fought and won. On the 16th Governor Yates issued a proclamation calling upon the women of the state to "prepare and send to the front hospital supplies of clothing, bedding, lint and bandages."

From a second story window of the court house John Moreland, in trumpet tones, proclaimed the news and asked the women of Decatur to collect all the old table cloths, napkins, sheets and petticoats they could possibly spare and send them to the residence of Judge Greer where the Aid society was requested to meet at once, every woman bringing with her a case knife and pair of scissors.

Before noon every nook and corner of Judge Greer's residence was filled with eager women, sorting rags, scraping lint and rolling bandages.

There were 2,108 wounded soldiers waiting for help on the field of Donelson. Dr. Ira Curtis and Dr. H. C. Johns had volunteered under the governor's call to go to the relief of their army of sufferers and "rush work" was done to furnish them with supplies to take with them. Dr. William Barnes and Dr. Moore spent the day in assisting and instructing hundreds of women in the art of scraping lint and rolling bandages. Some few took home their work, but the gregarious nature that demands human sympathy and human touch in time of trouble compelled all sorts and conditions of women to seek companionship and sympathy, sitting on the crowded floor while they talked and wept and scraped lint.

In a few hours a barrel of bandages and several large boxes of lint were ready for our departing surgeons to take with them when they joined Governor Yates' party at the depot that evening.

For nearly a week Mrs. Greer's house was the work shop of the town. Following the first day's supplies, shirts and drawers were made as fast as the devoted band of directors could cut out and distribute them. There were only two or three sewing machines in town, but they were put into use and the work did not cease until every yard of muslin available and every inch of old linen that could be found had been converted into hospital stores.

This week of intense excitement and hard work is thus recorded in the secretary's book of the Hospital Aid Society:

Late battles in the west increasing the demand for hospital stores, the society met on Tuesday, Feb. 18, after an adjournment of six weeks. The meetings were continued through this week and a box containing the following articles were packed: Drawers, 30 pairs; slippers,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  pairs; arm pads, 12; shirts, 45; sheets, 43; pillow cases, 33; pillows, 2; rolls of bandages, 112; mosquito bars, Mrs. Smallwood, 6. This box was sent to the Sanitary Commission at St. Louis.

No report was made of a large box of delicacies, wine and cordials, that was sent in care of Dr. Curtis, nor of the barrel of bandages and boxes of lint the surgeons had taken with them.

On his arrival at Cairo Dr. Johns reported to the society that he had been assigned to the "City of Alton," a steamer with 300 wounded men on board, who were to be sent to the St. Louis hospital. He urgently requested that shirts and drawers be sent him at St. Louis as fast as the society could possibly manufacture them, and it was to him, in care of the Sanitary Commission, that the box above mentioned was sent. So urgent was the demand for these goods that the directors worked all day Sunday preparing work for Monday's meeting. The most of the work on the second week was taken to the homes of the workers, but Mrs. Greer's house was still used as headquarters.

When every cent in the treasury had been expended, every available yard of muslin made into hospital garments, every inch of old linen scraped into lint, when the boxes were packed and



expressed to their destination, the Hospital Aid society rested from its labors.

It had become self evident that a private house was no longer a convenient place for meetings and that the treasury of the society needed replenishing, so a business meeting was called for Feb. 28. The minutes of that meeting read :

The Masonic hall was tendered us free of charge for our meetings. Hereafter they will be held in that place, the home of I. B. Curtis being so far from the business part of town, it would be inconvenient in many respects. At the close of the week the fund in the treasury is found to be exhausted and the society a few dollars in debt. A meeting was therefore called by the president, Mrs. H. C. Johns, at the house of Mr. James Mil-likin, to complete arrangements for a "concert and tableaux," which had been proposed as a suitable manner in which to replenish the treasury.

It was resolved to return thanks to Mrs. Greer for the use of her house for the regular meetings since Jan. 17.

This is the only mention in the record of the presentation to Mrs. Greer of a beautiful family Bible, but Mrs. Hattie Abbott, a daughter of Mrs. Greer, who now owns the Bible, has preserved a mutilated newspaper clipping which tells the story after this manner :

The ladies of the Hospital Aid society a few days ago presented Mrs. S. F. Greer with a beautiful copy of the Holy Bible, in testimony of their high appreciation of her zeal in the good work. The following note accompanied the gift :

Decatur, February 28, 1862.

Mrs. Greer :

Will you accept from your sister laborers in the cause of the country and humanity this slight memento of the pleasant days recently spent beneath your roof? In after years, when you shall recount to your children the tale of the dark days of trial and affliction, brought upon the country by the acts of traitors, you will also remind them that the precepts of this Holy Book, acting upon the hearts of the women of the country caused many an aching heart to leap with joy and left ONE bright spot amid the general gloom.

Believing that it will be received in the same spirit of love and respect with which it is given, and accompanied by their hearty thanks for the efforts she has made for their comfort as well as for the efficiency of their labors, this Bible is presented to Mrs. Greer by the ladies of the Hospital Aid Society.

Mrs. Greer's reply :

Ladies of the Hospital Aid Society :

It is with pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your invaluable present and accompanying note. I herewith tender you my sincere thanks for the kind expression you have been pleased to manifest towards me. What——

The remainder of Mrs. Greer's reply is unfortunately lost, but I remember it as a beautiful tribute to the patriotism of the women of Decatur.

In the minutes of that meeting it was recorded that:

"It was resolved to return thanks to the directoresses who have labored so faithfully in the cause." It was "Resolved, That the thanks of the society be tendered Mrs. Ira B. Curtis for the offer of her house for future meetings."

(Observe that Mrs. ——— is beginning to be recognized as mistress of the house.)

"The society was presented with five dollars by William Wirt Sykes (probably the excess over ten dollars received from the lecture)."

The record further reads, "The labors of the society are closed for the present. Should there be a necessity hereafter, it is believed the ladies of the city will return with alacrity to the work."

At the called meeting at Mr. Millikin's, "The ladies voted on and decided to have two refreshment tables. Refreshments to be served at the close of the concert and tableaux." Committees were appointed to attend to the tables, advertise the entertainment and solicit supplies.

This concert was under the supervision of Mr. Louis Bunn and Mr. George Wessels. The tableaux were arranged by Mrs. Livingston, Mrs. Bell and others. The avails of the concert and tableaux are reported: Friday evening, April 25, at \$136.65 and Saturday evening, April 26, at \$45.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SOLDIERS' FAMILIES DESTITUTE.

In the preceeding chapter I have quoted verbatim from the "secretary's book," but I find it very tedious work, both for myself and my reader to accurately quote that which tells so little. In telling the rest of my story I will not confine myself closely to the text.

Almost immediately after the organization of the society it was found that hospital aid was but an infinitesimal part of the work that our hands had found to do. The first general meeting of this society was called to decorate Powers hall for the Thanksgiving festival. While at work some one remarked, "I wish that part of the money we make at the festival could be used for the destitute families of soldiers."

Another asked, "Couldn't we do something to provide some soldier's children with a Thanksgiving dinner?"

Then story after story was told of the destitution in soldiers' families. Some regiments had not been paid since their enlistment and the money left at home for the support of soldiers' families had been spent. Cold weather was causing much suffering and the demand for some relief was imperative.

The money derived from the Thanksgiving festival could not be diverted from the advertised purpose but some way must be found to help the soldiers' children to a happy Christmas.

Decatur was noted for its musical talent and a concert was suggested. Amanda Montgomery (Mrs. Wessels), who was on a stepladder tacking up decorations, volunteered to go at once and "see George," and through him secure the cooperation of other musicians.

She was gone about an hour and came back exclaiming, "Don't fret, Mrs. ——'s children shall have a Christmas dinner. Mr. Burrows and Lou Bunn have both promised to help

George get up a concert." She was received with cheers and preparations for Thanksgiving almost lost their interest in planning for Christmas.

The newspapers of the city entered heartily into the project and advertised it freely. A call for "a meeting of musicians to organize a musical society," was responded to by about one hundred amateurs and the Decatur Musical Union was organized. Two concerts were advertised for the second week in December, one for the "benefit of the poor and one for the Musical Union."

Both entertainments were successes and then the question arose, "who is to disburse this fund for the benefit of the poor." The treasurer of the union placed the money in the bank to the credit of the Hospital Aid society and that society solved the problem by organizing within its own ranks, "the Decatur Relief society," and electing Mrs. Lowber Burrows president, Mrs. H. C. Johns secretary, and Mayor E. O. Smith treasurer.

The primary object of those who had originated the concert had been "to give a good Christmas to our soldiers' children." Education through play and pleasure had not at that early date assumed the importance it has since attained, and serious objections were raised to "wasting money for nonsense." It would all be needed for "wood and shoes and something to eat before the winter was over." This difficulty was overcome by enlisting a bevy of young girls to work for the "Children's Christmas Festival." The Misses Isabelle Peddecord, Josephine Stamper, Jane McClellan, Marcella Greer, Anna Hargis, Myra Powers and others canvassed the town for second hand clothing, shoes and toys, while their mothers agreed to provide the dinner. The township societies were enlisted and turkeys, chickens, eggs and butter came from the country. All the soldiers' children in the county were invited, and Powers hall, free of charge, was turned over to the children for Christmas day. To prevent charges of partiality the toys were all placed in a fish pond behind a curtain and fished for by the children.

The very liberal donations of old clothes were stored in a small room over Stratton and Hubbard's store where they were

given out for the asking by a committee appointed for that purpose.

For more than thirty years the Decatur Relief society under the same president and secretary continued to receive donations of old clothes on Thanksgiving day and to give an annual charity ball. Guided by that charity that thinketh no evil and utterly unacquainted with the principles of scientific charity, they, with the best intentions in the world, continued in the manufacture of paupers until they discovered that they had five generations of degenerates to their credit. They then made an attempt to undo some of the evils they were responsible for by organizing an "Associated Charities," which included in its membership every church and lodge in the city and which failed because it fell into the hands of officers who neither understood its object nor sympathized with its ends.

## CHAPTER VII.

### GREAT MUSICAL ORGANIZATION.

The Decatur Musical Union, which had its inception in a Christmas festival for soldiers' children, was organized in December, 1861, with:

President, Lowber Burrows.

Vice President, Dr. William Barnes.

Secretary, J. R. Mosser.

Treasurer, W. T. Edmundson.

Musical Director, George F. Wessels.

Pianist, Miss Mattie Cass.

Ten days after its organization the society gave two concerts, one for "the benefit of the poor," and the other "to pay the rent of a hall and piano and to purchase music for the use of the Musical Union." The object of the society was "to bring together the musical talent of Decatur for educational and charitable purposes."

For more than twenty years this organization was the chief source of revenue for Decatur charities. Its members loved to sing and they loved to act. They sang well and acted well; were well costumed and well drilled; studied their parts with intelligence and cultivated harmony in their choruses, under capable instructors with critical ears. They gave freely of the best they could do for the joy of doing it and to help the needy.

It may be that my recollection of their oratorios, cantatas, concerts and tableaux is influenced by the glamor of years that are past, but I can confidently say with George Wessels that it was "the greatest organization of the kind ever formed. There never was another town that had a Musical Union like the old one in Decatur. They were fine men and girls; they could sing and they did and they had a jolly time. There will never be another like it."



Mr. Wessels has made music his profession for years. He has heard the best music of Europe and America and that is his verdict.\*

As long as Mr. Wessels lived in Decatur the Musical Union had a director who gave time, talent and enthusiasm to its success. He had a splendid bass voice and was always willing to sing in solo, duo, quartet, or chorus, had no jealousies, no axes to grind, no selfish ends to gain. When the Union lost Mr. Wessels, it lost its breath of life and, though many of its members continued to give their personal work to social and charitable entertainments, the Union was no more.

The society met every Tuesday evening and gave about six entertainments a year. There were many remarkably good voices in this aggregation of musical and dramatic talent. Mr. J. R. Mosser's remarkable baritone is remembered by every one who ever heard him sing. The Barneys, father and son, would have been a credit to any company of concert singers. A. P. Griswold and L. L. Ferris were tenors that are remembered with pleasure, while Joseph Ehrhard, George Patterson, Mr. Babcock and M. A. Myer had good bass voices. Until after her marriage to Mr. Rockwell, Pet Bunn (Miss Mary Elizabeth Bunn) was the leading soprano.

Later Miss Sallie Moore (Mrs. George R. Steele) and Miss Alida Suits (Mrs. Lewis Cass) took the leading soprano roles.

Mrs. Burgess, Mrs. Strong and Mrs. Wessels had fine contralto voices.

The members of the orchestra were:

Pianist, Miss Molly Masterson (Mrs. Edmundson).

First violin, Henry Ebert.

Flute, Dr. E. S. Jones.

Harp, Mr. Jordan.

'Cello, Ben Davis.

Double bass viol, Albert Condell.

Mr. Lowber Burrows was always stage director with Dr. W. Barnes as assistant. Mrs. Annie Livingston and Miss Star Mans-

\*From the Decatur Review of Feb. 4, 1905.

field (Mrs. G. M. Bruce of San Jose, Cal.,) were geniuses in costuming.

Mr. D. L. Bunn, who for more than fifty years sung his way into the hearts of Decatur people, had a tenor voice that I never heard surpassed. His tones were soft, sweet and clear as a flute and he enunciated every word effectively. Had he gone on the stage I have no doubt he would have won world wide fame. For years he sang in choirs and for funerals as well as for social and charitable entertainments without money and without price, but the demand for his services became so burdensome that, in self defense, he was compelled to join a professional choir.

The name of D. L. Bunn is endeared to thousands of Decatur citizens by the memory of his sweet tones in "The Last Sad Requiem for Their Dead."

I once met him in Greenwood cemetery, wandering among the graves, and, in answer to a question, he said, "I believe I must have sung at the funerals of two thirds of the people who are sleeping here. Some of them were buried fifty years ago and some yesterday."

Mr. Bunn inherited his splendid voice from his father, who was a singer and teacher of music. Mr. Bunn on July 21, 1864, married Miss Amanda Suits, who, with her sisters, was one of the original members of the Musical Union. His children, Miss Edna Bunn and Frank Bunn, inherit from their father well known musical ability.

There are only a few programs of the entertainments of the Musical Union extant. In addition to the more pretentious oratorios, given in costume, they gave a great many popular concerts. A quartet of their number could always be secured to sing patriotic, war songs and negro melodies at every social held by the Hospital Aid society. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," "Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching," "The Red, White and Blue," "Marching Through Georgia," were supplemented by "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," "Down in the Cornfield," "Old Shady" and other popular negro melodies of the day, and the audience invariably joined in the chorus.

Many old citizens will unite with The Review in affirming

that "the performances of the Decatur Musical Union were not tiresome and amateurish affairs. People went to hear the singing and then they went the second night. The week the first State Fair was held in Decatur the Musical Union gave four performances, all to crowded houses. After paying all expenses (and donating ten per cent to the Relief Society) they had money enough to buy a Chickering piano without exhausting the treasury."

It is a singular fact that the story of the Jews in Babylon, as told in music, has been given in Decatur in different forms and by different composers at least ten times within my recollection. The sacred cantata, "Esther, the Beautiful Queen," by W. B. Bradbury, was first produced by a "choral society" in 1856, not long after the opening of Powers hall. Miss Mary E. Bunn sang the role of the queen and almost all the other performers were afterwards members of the Musical Union. This cantata was reproduced in 1861.

An "Oratorio of Esther," another version of the same story, was given twice, once in 1864 and once as late as 1871. "Daniel, a Sacred Cantata," was given Jan. 20, 1863, "for the benefit of the poor," and a few nights later repeated for the hospital fund. On Thursday evening, March 3, 1864, there was given in Powers hall the grand dramatic cantata of "Belshazzar's Feast," in ten scenes in appropriate costume under the direction of G. F. Wessels, assisted by a new orchestra with new and splendid scenery, painted especially for the occasion. The hall was so crowded the first night that the cantata was repeated on Friday.

"Esther" was once given for the benefit of St. John's Episcopal church at Smith's opera house and on April 23, 24 and 25, 1874, "The Court of Babylon" was rendered by about seventy-five of the best singers in the city under the direction of the Baker family, "travelling promoters." Mrs. W. C. Armstrong was cast as queen while Mrs. Burgess, Pugh Gorin, Benton Blackstone and C. C. McComas had prominent parts and the chorus was composed entirely of Decatur citizens. Rev. W. N. McElroy preached on the subject of "Belshazzar's Feast" and the downfall of Babylon on Sunday evening, April 19. The dramatic interest

in the Babylonish captivity seems to have come down to the present day for "Ahasuerus" attracted large audiences at Power's opera house as late as the spring of 1912, when it was given three times under the direction of Miss Hall, the supervisor of Music for the Decatur schools, by Decatur talent, assisted by hundreds of school children.

I will reproduce a part of two of the old programs, for they possess an intrinsic interest of their own.

"Belshazzar's Feast" was given Thursday evening, March 3, 1864. It was advertised as a "Grand dramatic cantata in ten scenes, in appropriate costume by the Decatur Musical Union, under the direction of G. F. Wessels and assisted by a new orchestra with new and splendid scenery painted expressly for the occasion." Admission cards cost fifty cents. The doors were open at half-past six and the curtain rose at 8 o'clock.

The cast of the leading characters was as follows:

Belshazzar, King of Babylon.....	(Base)	G. F. Wessels
Nitocris, Queen.....	(Soprano)	Miss Sallie Moore
Daniel.....	(Tenor)	A. P. Griswold
Jewish Maiden.....	(Contralto)	Mrs. Burgess
Hananiah.....	(Tenor)	J. R. Mosser
Lord of the Court.....	(Tenor)	M. A. Myer
Lady of the Court.....	(Alto)	Mrs. Wessels
Chaldean High Priest.....	(Baritone)	J. J. Strong

Jewish men and maidens, companions to Daniel, full chorus of Jews, Chaldeans and soldiers composed the rest of the company.

"Daniel, or the Captivity and Restoration," a sacred cantata, was given Thursday evening, Nov. 20, 1863, in costume, by the Decatur Musical Union, for the "benefit of the poor." Tickets sold at the usual price of 50 cents but the performance opened half an hour earlier than "Belshazzar's Feast." The principal characters follow:

Queen.....	Miss Sallie Moore
Sister of Azariah.....	Miss Alida Suits
Azariah.....	Mr. D. L. Bunn
Daniel.....	Mr. L. Burrows

King.....Mr. Geo. F. Wessels  
Herald.....Mr. J. R. Mosser  
Baritone Solo.....Mr. J. A. Barney

There were a chorus of princes, chorus of Israelites and Persians, and other singers.

On the back of this program is this announcement:

"In rehearsal for next concert, the grand historic cantata of the Pilgrim Fathers!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### GRIM WAR COMES HOME.

After Donelson and its exciting events, the Decatur Hospital Aid Society adjourned. For two months we had spent one day in every week "sewing for soldiers," then for ten days we had exhausted our energies as well as our exchequer, in emergency work for the hospitals. Our boxes of stores were packed and gone; we had done what we could and were entitled to a rest from our labors; so the secretary's book records under date of February 28: "The labors of the society are closed for the present. Should there be a necessity hereafter it is believed that the ladies of the society will return with alacrity to the work."

There is no record of any other meeting till Friday, May 2, an interval of two months during which time the women of Decatur found that *they* had a distinctive work to do; work which brought them into intimate touch with the realities of war.

The battle of Belmont, the siege of Fort Henry, and the preparatory march on Fort Donelson, had filled every available hospital and almost every available house in the vicinity of Paducah, and between there and Fort Donelson, so all convalescent and wounded men, able to travel, were ordered north, either on furlough or to less crowded hospitals.

We were first awakened to the magnitude of the new work our hands had found to do, when about noon one day in March Mr. Slaughter of the Depot hotel, sent a boy on horseback to me with the following note:

"I have just received a telegram from the sanitary agent at Cairo that on the five twenty train this evening there are about fifty hungry, sick, and wounded soldiers, who will be given thirty minutes for supper at the station. I have notified Mrs. Hays, Mrs. Winholtz and Mrs. Greer. I will do all in my power to help the Aid Society feed these men, but as my force will have



all they can do to serve the regular supper to other passengers, I must have help. Please report as soon as possible."

"Old Billy" was hitched up and I reported.

Messenger boys (we had no telephones) were sent all over town asking housekeepers to send "Baskets of food for sick soldiers," to the depot at five o'clock. We borrowed tin cups from the stores, bought two pounds of *genuine* coffee, and Mrs. Hays browned and ground it. Mr. Slaughter had boiling water ready and loaned us a big coffee boiler.

When five o'clock came, there were twenty or thirty women on the platform waiting for the train. Baskets of hot buttered biscuits, cold meats, pies, cakes and pickles, with gallons of milk and cream, were ready for the supper. A telegram had been sent to Centralia, requesting soldiers not to leave their seats when the train reached Decatur.

When the car drew up to the platform, the men in the soldiers car crowded to the windows and to the platforms and gave "three cheers for Decatur." As soon as they could be induced to resume their seats two women, with baskets of tin cups passed down the aisle followed by two others with big pots of coffee, and others with buckets of milk; cream and sugar followed, and then the baskets of delicious food were passed to each man.

Every woman insisted on passing her own basket. Mrs. Peddecord had baked a hundred of her famous sour-cream biscuits, Mrs. Race had made fifty sandwiches, Mrs. Ryan had a bucket of pickles, Mrs. Oglesby, a big basket of doughnuts, which Mrs. White had fried. Some one, I wish I could remember who, brought a jar of pickled peaches, "enough to go around twice." Laura Allen's basket of red winter apples was "the last we had and just fifty of them." In other baskets there was food enough for every man to eat his fill, and the fragments were given to the commissary, for another time.

Pale, emaciated, half starved and dishevelled, the men met us with apologies for their appearance, smoothed down their hair with their fingers, and tried to hide the dirty rags that covered their wounds.

It was a sight to make angels weep, and as we passed down

the aisles, almost every woman "had to stop a minute to blubber," before she could pass on with her basket of "goodies." Some who were brave enough to finish their task without tears, sat down on the edge of the platform, as soon as they reached the open air and hiding their faces in their arms, sobbed aloud.

One little incident: As Mrs. Eliza Evans, (an aunt of Mrs. Theron Powers) passed her tin cups, one man took two, and said:

"I guess I will have to feed my comrade first and then eat my own supper."

"Oh no; let me feed him," said Mrs. Evans, and she passed her basket of cups to Mattie Wells, and took off her cloak. A handsome young fellow, who looked about twenty, had been "scalded when the rebels shot a hole through the boiler of the Essex at Fort Henry." Both his hands were bandaged and a pillow for his foot had been improvised from his blanket. He was "going home for mother to nurse." Mrs. Evans fed him as she would a baby, and jokingly talked baby talk as she did it. When he had "all he tud eat," she poured some water on her handkerchief, and washed his face.

"Thank you, that is just the way my mother will do it when I get home—and then she will kiss me."

Mrs. Evans stooped and kissed him on his lips and—fled in tears.

This was only the beginning. For months, "feeding the soldiers at the depot" had all the dramatic interest of a theater, to which the admission fee was a dish of fried chicken, or some other "dainty bit, to set before a king."

The first mention of this work on the record is dated on Friday, May 23. "Hall opened at nine o'clock. The president called the meeting to order at three. Sick and wounded soldiers passing through this place on their way home have heretofore been fed by the hospitality of the citizens. In this way there has sometimes been a greater amount of food than is necessary, and sometimes the supply is not sufficient. It has been thought best to make a different arrangement. Therefore,

"Resolved, To set apart \$17 to be appropriated to relieving the

hunger of sick soldiers passing through out city, and that a committee be appointed to take charge of the fund, see that it is properly expended and attend regularly at the depot."

No other mention is made of this work, except in the first annual report of the president, October 17, which estimates, from data on hand that "since the battle of Fort Donelson" the ladies of our society have visited the depot nearly every evening and given a comfortable supper to about twelve hundred "sick and wounded soldiers."

It had not taken many days to discover the necessity of systematizing this new work. No regular meetings of the Aid Society were being held at the time so an unauthorized committee was appointed by the president to bring order out of chaos, and the above resolution was a belated effort to give legal authority to the committee and to pay a debt of seventeen dollars incurred by them.

Mrs. Winholtz, (grandmother of Mrs. Anna Henkle McClelland) was chairman of that committee, and Mrs. Thomas Hays, (mother of Major F. L. Hays) was secretary.

They made an arrangement with the agent of the Illinois Central Railroad at Centralia to telegraph to the Decatur agent, "the number of soldiers on the north bound train when it left Centralia." This report was immediately sent to Mrs. Hays and preparations were made accordingly.

Flour was bought, one sack was sent to Mrs. Winholtz, for yeast bread, and one to Mrs. Hays "who always had luck with salt rising," and these ladies pledged themselves to supply bread. Coffee, sugar and butter were bought, and stored in a room. loaned the society by the proprietor of the depot hotel. Three dozen tin cups, a five gallon coffee pot, six pitchers and a box of tin tea spoons, were donated. Ten quires of heavy brown paper were cut into squares to be used as plates. The cook at the hotel always had boiling water ready at five o'clock, and a committee of four, (serving one week) made the coffee and cut and buttered the bread.

It was hard work, but it was exciting and interesting, and there was always a "waiting list," for the coveted appointments.

The town was divided into four districts, each in turn furnishing "the extras." A well filled basket was the necessary card of admission to the soldiers' car. In some way, now incomprehensible to me, the telegraphic report from Centralia was quickly circulated and the supplies graduated according to the number of soldiers expected.

Some times men refused the offered tin cup, with "Thank you, I have no money. We haven't been paid for months," and when they learned that the supper was a free will offering, without money and without price, their gratitude was pathetic.

There were always dainties to tempt the lost appetite of the sick man, and the exclamations of delight at the unwonted spectacle of eatable food were dramatic and sometimes uproarious.

"Fried chicken, by Jove, boys."

"Hurrah, pickled peaches! did you ever!"

"Hello boys I've got a jam sandwich!"

"That's nothing, I've got a piece of genuine pound cake!"

Once, one with a sob said, "the salt rising bread tastes just like that—that—mo—mother used to make."

We always mingled tears and laughter, mostly tears.

One evening, when we had more than the usual number of guests, the men learned that the wife and sisters of General Oglesby were among those who were serving them. The news quickly passed through the car, and when the train pulled out, all the men were lined up at the windows and on the platforms, to give a hip-hip-hurrah for Mrs. Oglesby. Then hip-hip-hurrah for Mrs. Peddecord, and another for Mrs. Prather, and then, three cheers and a tiger for the ladies of Decatur.

One day there came from Centralia, the news that thirty or forty, "exchanged prisoners of war," would be our guests that evening. The sympathy and the *curiosity* of the town was excited, and the baskets were both numerous and daintily filled.

The pen of Dante, could hardly tell the story of that evening. Big-eyed skeletons of men told us tales of thirst, in full view of streams of water that flowed just outside the dead line; of hunger, that was abated by chewing the leather of their shoes; of lashings with a "cat o' ninetails;" of wounds dressed with salt and

gunpowder, and worst of all of tantalizing tales of rebel victories. Every man told a different story, each more harrowing than the other, till our souls were filled with wrath and indignation and Mrs. Evans exclaimed as she left the car:

"I have always been a Universalist, and never believed there was a hell, but now I hope there is! There is no other place fit for such devils."

Providing for the comfort of convalescent soldiers en route to their homes was a problem difficult of solution, both for the government and the Sanitary Commission. I know of no place except Decatur, where any *regular* and *systematic* effort was made to relieve the condition of these, often penniless, travelers. The regular supper station of the north bound Illinois Central trains was Decatur and Decatur women took it upon themselves to see that no man who had been wounded in battle, or had lost his health in the service of his country, should pass hungry, through their city. The fame of our suppers went far and wide. When officers or men *had* money they frequently insisted on paying for their suppers, "to help you give some other poor fellow that can't pay for it, as good a supper as we have had."

Passengers, other than soldiers, frequently asked to be allowed to "contribute to your supper fund." One evening, just before the train pulled out a beckoning hand called me to the car window, and a weeping woman, whose black habiliments told her story, thrust ten dollars into my hands with "God bless and help you" as her parting words.

I think the regular serving of suppers ceased early in the winter. The congestion in the hospitals south of Cairo had been relieved, and only when, after some battle, the daily telegram from Centralia reported six or more wounded men on the train, was the "basket brigade" called into service. If only two or three suppers were called for, the lunch counter of the Central House served them, at reduced rates, and charged the bill to "the ladies."

There is no mention in the minutes of the Aid Society of any appropriation of money, other than the "seventeen dollars set apart" on the twenty-third of May for the use of the "Depot Committee." My impression (in the absence of any records) is,

that the donations received from travelers paid for the flour, coffee, sugar and butter, and for occasional meals served by the hotel. Of one thing I am sure; the labors of that committee ended only with the war.



## CHAPTER IX.

### AID SOCIETY REBELS.

The invasion of Tennessee and Mississippi by the Union Army and the destruction of property by the Confederates as they evacuated the country left many homeless refugees in the wake of our army. Some of these people were the wives and children of Union soldiers whose homes and fields had been devastated by the rebels. Many others were the families of men who had been conscripted into the Southern Army. "A strange infatuation had seized the Southern leaders to destroy the property of their own people, to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy," so the families of the men in their own army were left homeless and helpless at the mercy of the invaders.

This army of camp followers became very burdensome, as well as an element of danger. Dr. Johns wrote under date of Iuka, July first, 1862:

Last evening one of our men was shot from ambush, while out picking blackberries. I wish we were allowed to scour the brush, and clear the country of the d——d white trash who claim to be Union. Their wives and children camp all around us and demand protection and rations, while the men, instead of being in the Union Army, are skulking in the woods shooting every soldier they can get a pop at. Two-thirds of these women are spies,—their presence is very demoralizing but I don't see anyway of getting rid of them but to shoot them.

Impending battles made the removal of this demoralizing impedimenta imperative, and they were sent north as a military necessity. They were dumped by hundreds at stations along the line of the Illinois Central, and Decatur got her first dose sometime in August, 1862.

One morning Mayor E. O. Smith received a telegram from "Headquarters" at Cairo, announcing that "about sixty refugees, women and children, will be left at Decatur on the five p. m. train. Make some arrangements for their reception."

This was a military order to the mayor of the city, but so

accustomed had the authorities become to calling upon the women for help in emergencies, that this order was at once transferred to the Aid Society, with generous offers to "give you all the assistance in our power."

We were not very anxious. Others, beside Dr. Johns, had written home descriptions of these "miserable wretches, who follow the camps everywhere."

But—they were women and children—they were driven from their homes by our enemies—there was no escape—so *we* made "arrangements for their reception." Mrs. Greer reported "that the old Methodist church back of her house was empty." It could be used as shelter for part of them "until something better could be done." Mrs. Evans found an empty house in the northeast part of the town where about twenty could be stored.

The old church was cleaned, some soldiers' wives volunteering to do the work. Mr. Renshaw donated a big load of straw which was spread on the floor for beds, "they will probably bring their own bed clothes," ventured a soldier, not long returned from the "Army of the Tennessee." Two cooking stoves were rented, some big empty boxes secured for tables, and we were ready to lodge them for the first night. The "depot committee" agreed to serve them supper, and the town assembled on the depot platform to receive our unwelcome guests.

At five thirty "Decatur's quota" was unloaded at the station and the train passed on.

A few people had gone to the train prepared to "entertain some of the unfortunates" at their homes but—they didn't.

The indescribable mass of filth, disease, vermin, and tobacco that had been unloaded from the train began to clamor:

"What's you'uns goin' to do with we'uns?"

"We'uns is used to sleepen out o'doo's."

"My gals don't keer where theyse put, so you fills their bellies."

"Has you'uns got any snuff heah, we'uns is tired of chawin'."

There were whole families, "grampa, maw and the gals and the chiluns" grouped around old bed-ticks filled with "we'uns plunder," patient, submissive and *receptive*.

"Aint you'uns got no cawn bread? wheat bread aint fillin'?"

"My golly-gosh, you'uns is got pow'ful lot to eat."

Those were some of the comments on the supper we had prepared for them.

When Mrs. Greer saw the crowd she rushed frantically to Olney's grocery store and ordered two large tubs sent at once to the old Methodist church. Then she begged the use of a big tarpaulin and hung it across the corner of the church. The tubs were put behind the curtain, the bath was improvised, but its use was declined.

"We'uns is too tired to wash tonight, and I reckon we aint ust to water nohow."

That night the president of the Aid Society called a meeting of the executive committee at Mrs. Evans' rooms in the Revere House, to which she invited the mayor, the overseer of the poor and a few "prominent citizens."

"The last straw had been put on the camel's back and she kicked," was H. B. Durfee's concise report of that meeting.

From that time on, the board of supervisors and the mayor of the city assumed the responsibility of "providing for the refugees." The old church and one other house provided shelter. The supervisors furnished wood, and rations, and ordered the children sent to school. The consequences of that order will never be forgotten by any old citizen of Decatur. Red precipitate and zink ointment became the chief articles of trade in the drug stores, and larkspur seed was at a premium. Grandpap said:

"Taint no use to try to cure it. We'uns all got it when we fust went into camp back of *Corinth*. And—you'uns 'll have to cut off them curls, 'en fine combs is no good, but larkspur seed tea will kill em, if you'uns hes the larkspur seed. We'uns aint got none."

The doctrine of "the universal spread of contagion by contact" was positively proven and the fecundity of the "pediculus capitis," proved to be even greater than that of the common house fly, as told in the modern newspaper.

There were among these people a number of healthy looking young women and girls, who were offered situations, with board

and wages. These were promptly and indignantly declined. "Thank'ee, my gals aint no niggers, if we is po', and haint got no larnin'."

(Thirty years after, the decendants of those girls were, and had been continuously, on the pauper roll of Macon County.)

In October, Decatur received another consignment of refugees, (at least a hundred) who were taken directly to the fair grounds and corralled in the buildings and stalls which a week or two before had held the exhibits and cattle at the County Fair.

In some way a fund was provided for the expenses of these people, it may have been by taxation, but my impression is that it was by subscription. The county supervisors certainly had some control of it and I suppose hired a man to disburse it, for I find in a report of the "Proceedings of the Supervisors Court," February term, 1863, published in the Decatur Magnet of April 16, 1863, that "Mr. Brown of Blue Mound offered the following: Resolved, By the Board of Supervisors of Macon County, that the board of trustees of the Volunteer Aid Society are hereby recommended to pay George W. Baker out of the funds of said society such salary as they may deem sufficient, to pay him for his trouble, as back pay and time spent for said society, and that we believe the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars a year, a sufficient sum to pay him for all his trouble connected with said society, which resolution was adopted."

In the bills for "Pauper expenses" there is this item: "To H. B. Durfee agent for county proportion as per assessment No. 6 and 7 on the subscription to said society \$900."

Again, "Mr. Lichtenberger offered the following:

"Resolved, By the Board of Supervisors of Macon County that the treasurer of the county convert the bonds now in his hands, in specie which was collected for the Volunteer Aid Society, into current funds, and pay said order of nine hundred dollars in current money to the agent of said society, on behalf of the county and that the treasurer charge himself with the surplus arising from the sale of said specie, which motion met with a second and carried."

By this transaction, the county made a profit of about \$648.00,

the premium on gold at that date being in the neighborhood of 172.

The above extract, from the transactions of the supervisor's court, is the only information I have been able to find, regarding the "Macon County Volunteer Aid Society."

I will give one other interesting item from this same report:

The committee appointed to inquire into the claim of Henkle, Shellabarger & Company for flour furnished on an order of Joseph Kaufman, overseer of the poor, to Dick White, a man of color, who was a pauper, submit the following report: We find that the pauper laws of this state declare that any person, who shall be unable to earn a livelihood, in consequence of bodily infirmity, shall be supported out of the county treasury. We are therefore of the opinion that no distinction be made, or intended to be made by the pauper laws on account of color or race, and that the claim of Henkle, Shellabarger & Company for \$2.75 ought to be allowed.

(Signed) ALVIN EMERY,  
WM. T. CRAWFORD,  
I. S. BOARDMAN.

Report received, committee discharged, and an order drawn on the treasurer for \$2.75.

## CHAPTER X.

### GRIEF, THEN WORK.

After this digression I resume my narrative of the strenuous and exciting days of eighteen hundred and sixty-two.

Six weeks after Donelson came the glorious but sanguinary victory of Shiloh. The news was received at first with wild demonstrations of joy, but an hour or two later the second despatch announced that "The Forty-first Illinois, which was in the front of the battle, had suffered severely."

With the Forty-first were Pugh and Tupper, Willis Oglesby and Alonzo Burgess, Bradsby and Nail, Kanan, Winholtz and Steele, and many others whose wives and mothers, sisters and sweethearts had been for months co-workers in the Aid Society.

There was a week of anxious suspense before an authentic report of the dead and wounded told us that the "gallant Colonel Tupper had fallen while leading his regiment in a victorious charge against the enemy," and that Willis Oglesby (the father of Mrs. A. R. Montgomery) had been found dead on the field of battle.

On April 22 Decatur put on mourning for "the dead of Shiloh." Public buildings and churches were draped with black, and flags were floated at half mast and multitudes assembled at the grave of Ansel Tupper, to pay their last tribute of respect to the man, and renew their vows of consecration to the flag for which he died.

The closing words of the patriotic funeral oration of the Rev. Jesse H. Moore created a deep impression, when raising his right hand he solmenly exclaimed:

"Colonel Tupper is dead. Treason has done the deed—the enemies of his country are his murderers. Now, here over the grave of the slaughtered brave, let us swear a new allegiance to our country and eternal, uncompromising enmity to treason."



A thousand hands were raised and a deep low murmur of "Aye, we will" came from the hearts of the people.

A baby boy, (Luther Martin, the son of my soldier brother), had been born in my house that day, and in the evening Mrs. Greer and Mrs. Hays came up to congratulate the mother and ask news of the father, and tell me the story of that solemn oath.

Event rapidly followed event in the next three months. The western armies had conquered the Mississippi from Cairo to below Memphis and Farragut's guns had opened it from its mouth to Vicksburg. Grant had opened up the valleys of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers and conquered every stronghold of the enemy in Tennessee and northern Alabama—but—"All was quiet on the Potomac," and "McClellan's army of 222,196 men were drilling in entrenchments around the National Capital."

An impatient nation was persistently crying "On to Richmond" and McClelland had at last informed the President by letter that he "purposed with this force to move into the enemy's country and crush the rebellion in its very heart." The world was anxiously waiting the fulfillment of this threat. The great army of the Potomac had been transported by sea to the vicinity of Richmond, and rumors of battles were rife. Hope deferred made hearts sick and the tension of emotional waiting, amounted almost to hysteria.

I have before me two packages of yellowed letters from which I could fill a volume, with very interesting and readable extracts. My letters to my husband are chiefly reports of farm operations, and news of the children's doings, but every one of them has some item of news, which when taken together give a concise and comprehensive epitome of events, with their political and emotional consequences. I will quote such portions of these letters as tell the story of the summer of eighteen hundred and sixty-two.

May 29. An effort is being made to secure the establishment of a military hospital here. So many sick soldiers pass through, and so often they are unable to go further, that we need some place where they can be properly cared for. We are now paying the expenses of two men who were left on our hands. If we get a hospital in Decatur I wish you would apply to Governor Yates for a position as hospital surgeon. You could serve your country here as well as in the field, and you could be at home.

May 29. Tomorrow we will send a box to you in care of Rev. Mr. Minor, Chaplain of the Seventh Cavalry. He thinks he will be able to get

this to you, but if he fails in that, is to send it to Dr. Trowbridge. He will at least see that if possible it goes to our own men. We did not send you as many drawers and shirts as we intended but there has been such a demand for these articles since the battle of Pittsburg Landing that we have sent them to the sanitary commission as fast as we could make them. The ladies have met every day and a great deal of work has been taken home. Stamper & Condell have in store a great deal of muslin, crash and flannel that they bought at anti-war prices, and which have doubled in value. They are selling these goods to the Aid Society at *cost*, so that we are getting muslins at 14c, which they are selling down stairs at 35c. We think it a very patriotic offer for this class of goods is going up and they could make big profits on all the goods we use.

The secretary will mail you a list of the articles sent by Mr. Minor. They include the things you have suggested, as far as possible. Did you say a peck of onions would be most acceptable? Anyway we have sent you a half bushel. Mrs. Winholtz and Abbey made the yeast and we are sure it is good." A half bushel of dried yeast is in the list sent by Rev. Minor.

May 25. The condition of the wounded men whom we feed at the depot is very deplorable. Many of them have not had clean dressings on their wounds for weeks.

A man named Dubois was brought home from Paducah by his brother. His leg had been broken and reset three times by bungling surgeons. His condition is indescribable. Our society is taking care of him and doing all we can to relieve his condition, but he will certainly die.—Poor Doctor Curtis is very low.

At present it takes all the money we make at the socials to take care of the sick and wounded at home.

May 31. There is a box of hospital stores from our society at Cairo which was sent to Governor Yates for the "City of Alton." I have just had a letter asking what disposition is to be made of them. The ladies are anxious they should be sent to you. I wish you would write to the Rev. Folsom at Cairo for them. It is very discouraging and disappointing to find that the stores we prepared with such haste and care have been lying at the depot at Cairo three months. Who is to blame?

June 3. Yesterday we started the experiment of holding a sociable once a month to keep our treasury in running condition. Only the first ward of the city was solicited for last night's supplies. We had ice cream, strawberries and cake. Mr. Wessels gave us a great many flowers, which sold well. We charged no admission, but cleared \$33, which is to go to the committee in charge of the sick soldiers in town.

The monthly "sociables" became a regular feature of the Aid Society work, but it was soon decided that an admission fee must be charged. One ward at a time was solicited and refreshments were donated. The ice cream committee met at the hall, and with the assistance of small boys manufactured their own ice cream.\*

I remember that it was always pronounced *good* though it was made of new milk and *raw* eggs. The Musical Union always

\*Judge Johns says, Jay Mansfield, Corwin Johns, and George Stuntz were generally the small boys.

furnished a programme, sometimes very elaborate, but usually a quartette who sang patriotic songs and negro melodies, the audience joining in the chorus. Another letter says:

Yesterday John W. Bear raised a full company of eighty-six men for the Sixty-Eighth Illinois Regiment. This new regiment is only enlisted for three months under a call from Governor Yates to serve as state militia. Every man, or boy, in the company is from Decatur. Corwin was wild to join the company, but I did not have to say no, for he was so decidedly under age that he was not even considered. When he found he could not go himself, he came frantically to me for permission to take young Bramble's place in Capren's china store and send Bramble, *who was* old enough, as his substitute. I really could not help laughing, for the boy was in such deadly earnest. This new company is organized to do guard duty at Camp Butler. Robert Montgomery, Ticy Kaufman, George Stuntz, Hiram Dillehunt have all enlisted. Thaddeus Montgomery enlisted with a company of school boys at Bloomington.

An optimistic letter from my father to Dr. Johns dated "June 10, 1862," says: "The events of the last few days indicate a speedy close of the war. The Mississippi valley now being open and the rebels cut in twain, any further efforts of the traitors seem futile."

June 26.—Conflicting stories of victory and retreat come every hour from the vicinity of Richmond. One story is that when within four miles of Richmond a retreat was ordered, and that reliable contrabands report that the Confederate Congress has abandoned Richmond. I believe one thing is sure, it cannot be many days till we will hear that Richmond is ours, but meanwhile the strain of anxiety is sickening.

Our gooseberries have been a great success. I have sold \$29.75 worth and there are still great quantities left. I have invited the Aid Society to spend my birthday, the 28th, with me (picnic dinner) and pick and can as many as possible for the soldiers. We have engaged a tinner from Morehouse to solder the cans. We were very glad to hear from you that they were just what you needed.

June 29.—We had twenty-seven ladies at our gooseberry party. The girls picked all day and the other women stemmed them. Mrs. Ryan and Mrs. Evans superintended the canning. We have 18 half gallons ready to send. We had a jolly picnic dinner which was greatly helped by about a gallon of raspberries that Jen Farzier and Mattie Wells picked and brought in to help out with the desert.

The reports from Richmond grow more and more harrowing. It is arranged that on the first news of the surrender, the church bells will all ring, so every time there is the clang of a *car* bell, we all jump nervously to our feet and listen.

July 2.—This afternoon about four o'clock, I was sitting (very blue) preparing currants for canning, when suddenly every bell in town commenced ringing. I sprang to my feet and cried, "Richmond must be taken," then ran out to the stile where I could see the men at work at the hay and called to Corwin to know what was the matter. He threw up his hat and yelled "Richmond is ours," and boom went a cannon. I sat down and cried. "What a fool," said I to myself, and attempting to wipe

away the tears, "boohooed again." In about an hour, father came up and the children came running in, screaming, "Richmond is ours." I ran to meet him and he grasped both of my hands (covered with sugar and currant juice) and shook them as if he hadn't seen me for a month and the big tears rolled from his eyes. He had to go on to the portico to wipe his eyes and clear his throat before he could say, "Yes, Richmond is ours."

Corwin, who had disappeared, came back soon with a description of the doings down town. A large jug of whiskey had been procured and upon the corner near McMillen's men were going through the process of administering the oath. They made every man walk up, take off his hat, raise his right hand and take the oath from the jug. When anyone refused, he was picked up and carried to the spot, some one held his hat, some one else administered the oath. In that way Father Stamper, Enoch Falkner, Mr. Hinkle, A. S. Mills, Mr. Greer and several others took it. Most of them were carried to the spot by four men. They at last attempted to make Dr. Moore "take the oath," which he declined doing after that fashion. Five men tried to take him out of the store but could not, but at last, seven did. He took this all good naturedly but when with five or six holding him, George Baker attempted to force some rot-gut whiskey down his throat, he got mad and came pretty near whipping the whole crowd. I believe Baker escaped a whipping by apologizing.

Never was such wild running about, shaking hands, cheering, and yelling witnessed in Decatur. They say Fort Donelson wasn't a patching to it. Tonight, they are firing cannon and making speeches. I am writing to work off the excitement before I go to bed.

Next morning.—Father has just been up and informed us that the report of the taking of Richmond is a hoax and that McClellan is badly defeated. The revulsion of feeling is more than I can bear, and I am actually sick.

July 5.—The Fourth of July celebration is over and it seems that reverses, defeats and disappointments only serve to fire the enthusiasm of our people and to deepen the determination to never say "die," for this day will always be remembered as the greatest Fourth ever celebrated in Decatur.

The procession is said to have been the longest that ever wended its way to the fair grounds on any occasion. Very large delegations were in from every township with banners, wagons of girls representing the states and other union devices. There was a much larger crowd than celebrated the Fourth last year. Seth Post made the oration, which was said to have been very good and very patriotic. I could not begin to get within hearing distance. Father Stamper's prayer has called forth a great many comments. It was very bitter against traitors at home and much resembled David's prayers for his enemies, which most folks would call curses. The dinner in picnic style went off splendidly and there were extra provisions enough to have fed a regiment of hungry soldiers, and oh! how I wished some of them could have the surplus.

The toasts and responses after dinner were in the usual style, but all intensely patriotic. The President's proclamation calling for 300,000 more men was read and received with rousing cheers, and waving of hats and handkerchiefs.

July 6.—The Sixty-Eighth was mustered into the service of the United States yesterday and are ordered to Washington. They are to start tomorrow. It is understood that they are to do guard duty at the Capitol, and Corwin is more disconsolate than ever. Poor boys, they don't one of them realize what they have done. They think going to Washington is a lark.

July 13.—I presume you have seen Governor Yates' noble letter to the President. I sincerely hope that a policy has at last been forced on the administration that will put an end to this horrid war. When the sore place is badly kicked, I think the rebels will soon cry, hold—enough! The nigger has stood in the way too long, it is time now to use him. When our grand army at last goes to work to *kill* the rebellion, instead of plastering it over with soft soap, then it will end.

(No date, part of letter missing)—Last evening there were some exciting rumors of an English fleet at New Orleans. I hope they are unfounded. God grant that no more horrors may be added to the war, but if England interferes, we will have war indeed.

July 17.—I entertained your friend, Lieutenant Bain, and wife at dinner. His account of the treatment our soldiers are receiving from the rebel women whose niggers and chickens they are guarding roused my indignation to the highest pitch, but thank God the confiscation bill has passed and no more soldiers will be put under arrest for stealing an onion from a woman who spat upon, and cursed them while they guarded the chickens which she sells to you for ten dollars a dozen.

July 20.—The town is in a furor of enlistment excitement. Mr. Nathan Tupper, who has declared ever since his brother's death that he would enlist and avenge him, is getting up a regiment. Rev. Jesse Moore is also working up a regiment, and any number of men are enlisting companies. I am afraid there are more captains than men. I understand that McClurg and Robinson have each nearly completed their companies. Billy Brown has twenty-four; and several other incipient companies are at least talked of. It looks as though Macon County would prevent the necessity of a draft in this state.

July 26.—There is a great deal of excitement about enlistments. I will send you a copy of Mansfield and Freeze advertisement, to show you the character of the ball they have set rolling, which bids fair to gather up a number of similar offers from business men. I hope that every man of property who feels that he would be making too great sacrifice of his business interests to go himself, will yet be compelled by public opinion to send a substitute to whose family he will guarantee a comfortable subsistence.



## CHAPTER XI.

### RUSH TO ENLIST—BOUNTIES PAID

Following the victory of Shiloh there was a period of general depression. Victories had been won, but results had not followed. We had occupied the land of the enemy, but Vicksburg still blockaded the Mississippi river. The most numerous and best equipped army of the nation had accomplished virtually nothing. "All was quiet on the Potomac." Slavery was still held sacred. Slaves were forbidden to come inside the lines of the Union Army, but were employed by the enemy to build fortifications, and work the plantations which supported their armies. The people of the North had become restive under the futile efforts of the administration, to gain the support of the supposedly "large loyal element of the South," and demanded that the negro should be used in the suppression of the rebellion.

Meantime the conduct of the negroes had surprised the world. There had been neither insurrection nor murder nor rapine. They had been quiescently loyal to their masters, but had been more loyal to themselves. Believing that the hand of God was working out their salvation, they had hopefully waited and prayed for "the coming of the Lord." It was neither cowardice nor indifference nor ignorance that held the hands of three millions of slaves from the destruction they might have wrought. It was simply *Faith*, an all prevailing belief that "God in his own good time, would set them free."

Governor Yates, believing that the time had come for the nation to avail itself of the services of these waiting millions, despatched an open letter to the President urging him "to summons all men to the defense of the government; loyalty alone being the dividing line between the nation and its foes." "Slavery, the cause of the rebellion and the bulwark of its strength, must be made the weapon for its destruction."

President Lincoln, harrassed as he was by extremists on both



sides of the slavery question, still maintained that calm, statesmanlike middle course, from which the best results were likely to flow. All his efforts to influence the border states to aid him in securing compensated emancipation, or, on the other hand to persuade the negroes themselves to some scheme of colonization; having failed, he at last issued the confiscation proclamation, which practically secured emancipation to the slaves of all men who were under arms against the United States government.

When on July 2 the call for 300,000 additional volunteers was issued, followed on August 6 by a second call for another 300,000, accompanied with the alternative of a draft, the solmen oath taken over Ansel Tupper's grave, bore fruit.

The people of Macon County determined to do their full duty. No blot on the patriotism of Illinois from the execution of the draft could be tolerated. Our quota must be filled by volunteers. The patriotic furor was as intense as it was contagious.

The floating population had already been swept into the army, the new levies must therefore come from the prominent, influential and prosperous citizens, yet it was manifestly not every man's duty to go into the army. The salvation of the nation demanded that its business brains should, at home, provide for the sustenance of its armies, yet men were accused of cowardice and self seeking, who refused to desert their manifest duty and be drawn by popular clamor into the ranks of the army.

Copperhead politicians were insidiously discouraging enlistments, by stimulating class feeling. Why should———who had a family to support by the work of his hands, risk his life to prevent men, "who were makng money hand over fist," out of the misfortunes of the country, being drafted into the army?

An element of truth in these insinuations claimed the attention of moneyed men, and led many of them to privately guarantee comfortable support to the families of men who enlisted. The majority of these transactions were never made public, but scores of patriotic men were made better soldiers by the assurance that their loved ones at home would not suffer want in their absence.

Another form of substitution, came into fashion. Women

took the place of young men in stores and offices, and men too old to serve in the army, entered into active business life, filling the places of younger men, who served their country in the field, while farmers who stayed at home pledged assistance in the work of their neighbor's farms.

Some provisions for the immediate expenses of men who were suddenly called away from work and home and family seemed imperative and "on July 26, 1862, in the board of supervisors, Lowber Burrows and others, 'influential men of the county who are heavy taxpayers,' presented a petition 'asking the county to lay a special tax for the purpose of paying every volunteer who is a resident of this county under the late call and who may enlist for the period of three years, a bounty of at least thirty dollars.'"

Supervisor Pritchett offered a resolution which was adopted, that this board will pay to each and every citizen of Macon county who enlists or has enlisted in said county as a private or non commissioned officer under the late call for 300,000, up to September 1, 1862, \$30 as a bounty, and upon evidence being filed of each enlistment a warrant be drawn to the wife or representatives of such volunteer.

"February 24, 1863. The Board passed a resolution that the treasurer of the county is instructed to pay in full the wives, widows or heirs of the volunteers in the U. S. service on bounty orders out of the first money which may come to hand by means of collection of taxes."

I have not been able to learn, to whom, or to how many men this bounty was paid, but enlistments were certainly stimulated by this provision for immediate expenses.

Incipient companies were formed all over the county. Mount Zion and Harristown and Macon had, in less than a month, enlisted full companies and elected their officers. Decatur had at least six captains in the field, with men joining their companies every day, and it was soon evident that Macon County would have more than a full regiment to her credit September 1. Nathan Tupper had been deterred from enlisting by a promise he had made that he would care for his brother's family, but strong pressure was brought to induce him to take command of an ex-

clusively Macon County regiment. He was assured by men of means that if he would consent to their plans, not only his pledge to his brother should be redeemed by them, but that if he should be disabled or killed, they would see that his family was well cared for.

Meantime Rev. Jesse H. Moore had been urged by many friends to take the lead in organizing a regiment and two Macon County companies were pledged to him. These companies went to Camp Butler and were incorporated in the One Hundred and Fifteenth Regiment, under the command of Colonel Moore, while the One Hundred and Sixteenth, "Macon County's own," went into camp in the Fair Grounds at Decatur, under Colonel Tupper's command.

## CHAPTER XII.

### STORIES OF FLAGS.

The patriotic fervor of the women of the county found vent in the presentation of flags to a company from their vicinity. The flags presented by the women of Mount Zion and Harsistown are still religiously preserved and cared for by the custodians to whom their companies committed them at the close of the war; and I take great pleasure in allowing these custodians to tell their own stories of these flags.

George W. Lyons of 539 West Green street, Decatur, has in his possession a flag which went through all the vicissitudes of war and victory, as the Regimental insignia of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, after the original regimental flag furnished by the state, was "put out of commission by shot and shell, though never surrendered." Mr. Lyons had promised me the story of this flag, and had with much care written all he knew about it for my use the night before his place of business was destroyed by fire. Then Mr. Lyons' "story went up in smoke." I will therefore be obliged to content myself with a reporter's story of Mr. Lyons' memories.

Mr. Lyons said the flag was made in the Powers building by a number of Decatur women. It was made under cover on account of the copperheads. Mrs. Powers, Mrs. Dr. Johns, Mrs. Dan. Brenneman, were some of the women. About \$400 was raised for the making of the flag.

It was first presented to the One Hundred and Sixteenth Illinois regiment in Decatur. Mr. Lyons is not sure where it was, but thinks that it was done on Lincoln square. However when the regiment went away they left the flag in Decatur and were carrying a state flag. This state flag saw service through many hard fights and was considerably shot and torn. It was put out of service at Camp Sherman, where the new flag came to the regiment. The old state flag is now at Springfield, Illinois. The

regiment was in Camp Sherman for the first time on July 25, 1863.

In October the regiment left the camp and were carrying the flag that was made in Decatur. This flag then followed them through all of their battles.

At Fort McAllister the flag was one of the first to be spread on the fort after its capture.

The first color bearer was William Smith of Co. G, One Hundred and Sixteenth Illinois regiment. Mr. Smith was injured at the fight at Kenesaw Mountain and the flag was then carried by a number of different men. It was carried off of the field at Resaca, the hardest fight that it went through, by Mr. Lyons.

Mr. Lyons does not remember who carried the flag at Washington and who brought it to Springfield for the final dismissal. At the final mustering out the flag was given to Dr. Ira N. Barnes to keep until the first annual reunion of the regiment. At this reunion it was voted to George W. Lyons and he has kept it since then, and still has it in his possession.

Mr. Lyons' estimate of \$400, as the cost of the flag, is probably erroneous. The hospital outfit of the One Hundred and Sixteenth was provided for at the same time that the flag was presented and I think that \$400 included the cost of that outfit.

The history of that important and most interesting of the work of the Decatur women is almost lost. I had an indistinct remembrance of such a flag having been part of our work in those exciting months of the summer of sixty-two, but failed for a long time to find any one who could even corroborate its existence.

One day a few weeks ago I met a lady whose presence in some way suggested the sewing of a star on a flag.

I went to her and asked:

"Mrs. ——— do you remember anything about a flag that the ladies of Decatur made for Colonel Tupper's regiment about fifty years ago. Didn't you help make it?"

"Certainly I remember it, I sewed one star on that flag. It was made in Powers Hall. I was notified that the *loyal* ladies of Decatur would meet in Powers Hall at nine o'clock, one morning, and my husband thought I had better go. It was rather danger-

ous in those days to be a Democrat, so as a Democrat, my husband advised me to sew a star on that flag, and I did."

She remembered nothing more, but I remembered that some test of loyalty was exacted from very many loyal people, who were under the shadow of suspicion, because an element of the Democratic party was accused of being allied with the Knights of the Golden Circle, in discouraging enlistments.

Later, I learned almost by accident that the flag I had been in pursuit of was a bundle of rags and tatters, reverently and lovingly cared for by George W. Lyons.

Miss Katherine Hamilton, principal of Pugh School in Decatur, has in her possession the flag entrusted to her father's custody, which was presented to Company E by the ladies of Harristown township and gives its history in her own words:

A CHERISHED FLAG OF COMPANY "E."

By Katherine Hamilton.

In response to President Lincoln's call for volunteers in 1862, one hundred boys in the vicinity of Harristown joined in the refrain, "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong." In honor of these boys, Misses Martha Eyman and Mary Eleanor McGuire rode on horseback for miles and miles soliciting funds with which to buy a company flag for the boys. The response was beautiful, signifying honor of country and love for the company.

Flag silk was not obtainable in Decatur. Through Stamper & Elliott, it was ordered by the committee from New York. A very serious and heavy hearted gathering of women and girls there was at John J. Batchelder's home to make the flag. Husbands, brothers and sweethearts were to go to war. Miss Abbie Batchelder stitched the flag together on her Grover and Baker double chain stitch machine, the only one in the country. The stars were placed in their field of blue by hand by Mesdames Lewis Eyman, Samuel Anderson, John Averitt, and Miss Mary Eleanor McGuire at Mr. Abraham Eyman's residence in Harristown.

With the flag, costing eighty dollars, and baskets groaning with toothsome eatables, fathers, mothers, sisters, young brothers, wives and sweethearts journeyed to Camp Macon (Fairview Park). The flag was presented to the company with due ceremony and entrusted to the care of the captain—then Captain Lewis Eyman. Families united for the last time, ate together. A goodly store of eatables were left with the boys to supplement their camp fare.

Soon the company was called to Camp Butler (Springfield) to be mustered into the service as Company "E"—116th Illinois—infantrymen. At the company's first engagement, Arkansas Post, January, 1863, Captain Eyman was killed. The flag was entrusted to the new captain for safe keeping. Thus many changes were made before the Grand Review at Washington.

While crossing a swollen river on the March to the Sea, the pontoon broke and the valise containing the flag went down, but was soon rescued



water-soaked, but all the more precious. No further accident befell the flag. It was brought home, cherished and honored by Captain Richard M. Hamilton.

The flag is now in the possession of a daughter of Captain and Mrs. Mary Eleanor Hamilton.

Rev. N. M. Baker is with fear and trembling trying to preserve the flag presented to Company C by the Mount Zion ladies, and has given me a very interesting history of that flag. Mr. Baker's story follows:

#### THE FLAG OF COMPANY C.

In August of 1862 a wave of patriotism was sweeping all over the loyal North. The magnitude of the war was beginning to be realized, and five hundred thousand additional troops had been called for. Men were enlisting in Decatur and in every village of Macon County. Thomas White, who had seen service in the war with Mexico, was enlisting a Company at Mt. Zion and in that vicinity, and at the same time the ladies were collecting money with which to buy a flag to present to the company when organized. They could not make it themselves and have it ready as soon as it would be needed; things moved rapidly in those days. Many of us enlisted on the sixth day of August; on the ninth sixty-three of us were sworn into the State service by a Justice of the Peace, and it indicates the spirit of the time that because that justice was suspected of Southern sympathies, some others refused to be sworn by him, though he read the oath from a printed legal form. On the thirteenth of August, with one hundred names on the roll, we met at Sulphur Springs, near Mt. Zion, to organize the company. There was a great crowd of people and a bountiful dinner was provided for all. Colonel Moore, who had the nucleus of a regiment in Camp Butler, made a patriotic address, after which the company was organized by the election of Thomas White, Captain; Michael Wallace, First Lieutenant, and Robert Foster, Second Lieutenant, with the necessary Sergeants and Corporals. And then, on behalf of the Ladies of Mt. Zion and vicinity, the flag was presented to the Company in an appropriate speech by Miss Sarah E. Price; and I received it on behalf of the Company, with the very best speech I could possibly make in reply, and of course I gave the ladies the solemn pledge of the Company that we would carry the flag with us, that we would never disgrace it by cowardice nor permit it to fall into the hands of the enemy.

On August fifteenth we went into camp in the Fair Grounds, which, now much enlarged, we know as Fairview Park. There were two other companies in camp when we arrived, and others came in soon after. We began playing soldier at once, with constant drilling, frequent marching, guard mounting, and all the rest of it. For a while there was controversy as to whether some of us at least should or should not join Colonel Moore's regiment at Camp Butler, but it was soon determined that we would stay together and form a regiment almost exclusively of Macon County men, to be known as the Macon County Regiment. On the sixth day of September an officer of the regular army appeared to muster us into the service of the United States; but some of the companies were not yet full, and we could only be mustered as a battalion and were so mustered, with J. P. Boyd in command. Days passed; the end of September was approaching, one company was not yet full, while others had

more men than the law required. Money was raised and enough men were paid one hundred dollars each to be transferred from the companies where they were not needed to fill up the complement of the one that was still lacking. Some men were transferred from the Mt. Zion company on these terms. The last obstacle being thus removed, the regiment was organized as the 116th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, on September 30th, with N. W. Tupper, Colonel; J. P. Boyd, Lieutenant Colonel, and Anderson Froman, Major. At the same time the various companies received their designating letters, and the Mt. Zion Company became Company C. As its place was in the center of the line, it was for a long time the Color Company, and during that same time one of its sergeants was Color Sergeant, having charge of the regimental flag. And though this is anticipating, it seems as good a place as any to tell a little story out of school, and I presume it is same to tell it, after all these years. As custodian of the colors, Company C had a peculiar opportunity, and I think that a few times, just to satisfy Company sentiment and pride, the regular flag was detached from its staff and this Company flag substituted in its place. And I think, though I would not swear to it, that at least upon one occasion it was so substituted and flung to the breeze as Old Glory and received a "baptism of fire" on the field of battle. In the organization of the regiment, I was made Chaplain, and so ceased to be a member of Company C, though my interest in it was not at all diminished.

We left Decatur for the seat of war on November the eighth, in thirty-six common box cars, and never thought of grumbling because we were not furnished with passenger coaches. This Company flag went through all the Vicksburg campaign, across to Missionary Ridge, through the Atlanta campaign, with Sherman to the sea, and back through the Carolinas; mostly, to be sure, packed in the strong box that held the Company books and papers. And it was with the Company when the victorious armies marched through the streets of Washington in that last great grand review.

After the Regiment was mustered out, this flag was kept in a hall in the village of Mt. Zion. At a great reunion of soldiers in October, 1878, the delegations from Mt. Zion, Long Creek and Wheatland Townships passed through Decatur to old Camp Macon on horseback, this flag of Company C being carried at the head of the column. At the yet greater reunion on October 6th and 7th, 1880, when General Grant and many other prominent men were present, Company C was there again with its dear old flag, this time on a temporary staff. The old staff had been lost in the burning of the hall where the flag was kept, and the flag itself barely escaped the same fate. And now it seems necessary to tell a little of my own romance in order to bring this story to a proper ending by showing how this flag of Company C comes to be in my possession. At the time the flag was presented, in August, 1862, Miss Price and I knew each other but slightly; but naturally the events of that day increased our acquaintance. It was equally natural that we should correspond while I was in the service, and just as natural that we should be happily married in the fall of 1864. At this reunion of 1880 we were both present. On the evening of October 7th, as we were about leave the grounds, the question was raised, what should be done with this flag? And by a unanimous vote of the Company, remembering the incidents of its gift and reception, it was placed in the joint keeping of my wife and me.

When the flag came into our possession, the silk in the white stripes was beginning to break, through the action of some material used in the lettering, making careful handling necessary. We hung it to the breeze a few times on recurring Fourth of July, and took it to some of the re-

unions of the 116th Regiment, that the survivors of Company C might see it. The last time that it appeared in public it was draped at the head of one of the stairways leading to the Chapel Hall of the James Millikin University, on the occasion of the celebration there of the one hundredth birthday of Abraham Lincoln. The blue ground and the thirty-four stars are yet good, the red stripes in fair condition, though slightly broken; but every time it is opened parts of the white stripes fall away and are lost. The thirteenth day of August, 1912, will be the fiftieth anniversary of its presentation to the Company. It is six feet, two inches long, and five feet, ten inches wide, and bears the following inscription: "Presented to Co. C. 116th Ills. Vol. Inf. by the Ladies of Mt. Zion and Vicinity." In letters of gold on the white stripes are the names of the battles in which this Company bore an honorable part:

"Chickasaw Bayou.

Arkansas Post, Champion Hills.

Vicksburg.

Jackson, Mission Ridge, Resaca, Dallas.

Kenesaw Mtn., Atlanta, Jonesboro.

Ft. McAllister and Bentonville."

A long enough record! I have always been proud of Company C, though I was not a member of it long. The boys made good the pledge I made for them to the givers of the flag. They carried it with them, they never disgraced it, for there was never a deserter from that company, and they never let it fall into the hands of the enemy.  
Decatur, Illinois, July 30, 1912.

N. M. BAKER,

Late Chaplain 116th Ills. Vol. Infy.

On the 20th of August, 1862, the ladies of Macon presented to Company E of the One Hundred and Fifteenth Regiment a beautiful flag. Miss Sarah Goltra made the presentation speech, to which Captain Lane responded on behalf of the company. I have been unable to learn the fate of that flag, but presume it too, is being cared for and cherished by some member of the company.

Some provision ought to be made for the restoration and permanent custody of these valuable relics, where fire cannot destroy nor thieves break in and steal. If glass cases were provided in one of the upper rooms of the Decatur Public Library for the preservation of these, and other historical relics of value, which are now in danger of being lost, a museum of history could be collected and preserved with little expense which would be of incalculable value to future generations.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### NO DRAFTED MEN—BOUNTIES.

Two intensely emotional years of preparation had passed. The last flag had been presented, the last picnic dinner eaten in camp, the last farewells spoken and grim reality replaced the pomp and panoply of war. Vicksburg had surrendered, Gettysburg had quieted the fear of invasion, yet the end seemed no nearer than at the beginning. Measles and typhoid and camp dysentery were depleting the ranks of the army. Political intrigue was weakening the power of the administration. Traitors at home were brewing discontent and treason. The ranks of the depleted regiments must be filled, and at last it became necessary to draft men into the service.

Illinois escaped the draft in 1862, but was not so fortunate in 1864. Mr. Cyrus Imboden has furnished me some interesting statistics in regard to the draft and the bounties paid to soldiers in that year. Mr. Imboden says:

The first and only draft for troops levied in our state was in 1864. The number of men in the entire state so drafted was 3,538. This draft did not apply to Decatur township, but a few men from some of the outside townships in our county were drafted. Mr. Schroeder informs me that Decatur township under all calls for volunteers issued by President Lincoln has to its credit 80 enlistments in excess of its quota. During the year 1864 Macon County, for the purpose of encouraging enlistments, paid a liberal bounty, issuing time warrants amounting to \$60,000. The men so enlisted were given these warrants and they were readily cashed by Dr. J. T. Stapp, Peddecord & Burrows, and James Millikin. There were quite a number of men drafted in counties adjoining Macon county who came to Decatur to secure substitutes. M. P. Murphey, Ben F. Dodson, and perhaps others, were largely instrumental in finding substitutes for these drafted men. I am reliably informed that as much as \$700 was paid for individual substitutes, and substitute brokers grew rich.

Under the last call for troops, Illinois had furnished 18,500 able bodied men, but so great was the need, that the Governors of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, tendered to the Government 85,000 men, too old or too young, to be subject to draft, but who could do guard duty, and man fortifications and thus relieve veteran

troops for active service. Illinois furnished thirteen regiments and two battallions of these men. Company "E" of the One Hundred and Forty-fifth was entirely enlisted from Decatur, with the exception of six boys from Bloomington who joined their Decatur school mates in that company. A few gray headed men, who had escaped enrollment on account of age, were induced by the parents of the boys to enlist and go as guardians for the children. It is to these companies that the G. A. R. is indebted for its long list of "youngest men," yet these boys are credited with "rendering indispensable and invaluable service in Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri."



## CHAPTER XIV.

### ACTIVE DAYS FOR AID SOCIETY.

I must return to my story of the work of the Aid Society. They had taken great interest in the two new regiments that they claimed as "ours" and on Friday, August 29th, it was

Resolved, to furnish the regimental hospitals of Colonels Moore and Tupper with the requisite articles for regimental hospitals; and that the surgeons of the One Hundred and Fifteenth and One Hundred and Sixteenth be requested to furnish lists of articles desired.

Resolved, that the hall be open on Monday and every day next week for work.

Sept. 11th. The Society, today, sent to the One Hundred and Fifteenth Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, a box containing the requisite number of articles for a regimental hospital, also a box of delicacies for the sick.

The contents of the box are enumerated in the Annual Report.

Tuesday, Sept. 16th. Rev. Lock, chaplain of the Second Illinois Cavalry, called upon the secretary this morning, stating that the sick and wounded of his regiment were very much in need of eggs, butter, potatoes, onions, etc., and asking assistance of our society. This was brought before the meeting this afternoon and donations of delicacies for the sick solicited. Thursday was appointed for packing the articles received, also for packing the box of hospital stores for the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment.

Secretary read to the society letters received from Colonel J. H. Moore of Camp Butler and Colonel Williams, commissary general, Springfield, and was requested to write to Colonel Williams for free transmission of the articles for Rev. Lock.

Mr. C. C. Burroughs requested some assistance from the ladies in pasting tickets into Testaments for the soldiers. Mrs. Hays, Miss Laura Allen, Miss Emma Powers, and Miss Mansfield were appointed a committee for that purpose to meet at the bookstore, at two o'clock Thursday afternoon.

Friday evening, next, being the usual time for the monthly sociable of the society, the necessary arrangements were made this afternoon. It was decided to have two ice cream tables. Miss Laura Allen, Miss Emma Powers, Miss Mansfield and Miss Pickerel were appointed a committee to attend one table and Miss Frazier, Miss Sallie Powers, Miss Thatcher and Miss May the other. It was thought best to make the experiment of a coffee table. Mrs. Johns, Mrs. Hays, Mrs. Elliott and Mrs. Millikin were appointed to attend it. Adjourned.

Oct. 15, 1862, an agent of the Jackson, Tennessee, Military Hospital visited the Society and left a formula for making mixed pickle for army use.



Donations of green tomatoes, cabbages, onions and cucumbers were received at the residence of Mrs. Greer, and two barrels and a half of pickle was prepared and shipped to Jackson on Nov. 4th.

The vegetables were sliced, laid in big clothes baskets, each layer sprinkled with salt. After standing twelve hours the salt water was pressed from them and they were packed in the barrels, ground mustard and pepper were mixed with vinegar which was boiled and poured over the pickle as each layer was packed in the barrel. After standing twenty four hours the barrels were headed up and the pickle was ready to ship.

Other articles sent with them were one barrel of cabbage, three bushels of potatoes, three bushels of apples and eight quarts of tomato catsup.

On Oct. 17th the annual meeting of the society was held in Powers Hall in connection with the monthly sociable. Mr. Lowber Burrows read the reports of the officers for the year. Amendments to the constitution were adopted. I will not cumber this book with a copy of the amended constitution. There was no amendment of practical importance excepting a provision for a 25 cent membership fee which gave each member a vote for officers.

Members of the society for the year 1863 were as follows :

Mr. L. Burrows	Mrs. Dr. Libbey	Mr. J. Shellabarger
Mrs. J. Ryan	Mrs. Newhall	Mr. Charles Thatcher
Mrs. S. F. Greer	Mrs. Dr. Moore	Mr. Charles Mansfield
Mrs. James Millikin	Mrs. G. W. Bright	Mr. Charlie Elliott
Capt. White	Miss Westerfield	Miss Star Mansfield
Mrs. A. T. Hill	Mr. Geo. F. Wessels	Mrs. W. T. Wells
Mrs. Thatcher	Mr. Wm. Edmundson	Mrs. R. C. Howe
Lieut. Mahannah	Mr. Wm. T. Wells	Mrs. F. P. Hardy
Mrs. Gen. Oglesby	Mr. G. M. Bruce	Mr. Wm. Martin
Miss Octavia Smith	Mr. Joel Brown	Mr. J. L. Libbey
Mrs. A. Kaufman	Mr. D. L. Bunn	Mr. J. H. Wassen
Mrs. E. Litten	Mrs. Col. J. Post	Mrs. James Jones
Mrs. E. A. Jones	Miss Emma Powers	Mr. Geo. Boher
Miss Howe	Miss Ada Powers	Mr. Starling Cool
Mr. William Bell	Mrs. Packard	Miss Laura Allen
Mr. John Ryan	Mr. J. Lake	Mrs. Dannels
Lieut. Crissey	Mr. S. F. Greer	Mr. F. P. Hardy
Dr. H. C. Johns	Mr. James Millikin	Mr. Sherry Wait
Maj. Froman	Mrs. G. W. Morehouse	Mrs. Ann Wassen
Capt. D. Allen	Miss D. Jamison	Mr. G. F. Hardy

Mr. J. F. Miller	Lieut. Caldwell	Mr. Shockley
Mrs. A. A. Powers	Gen. Oglesby	Mr. Wm. Bell
Miss Sallie Powers	Mrs. M. A. Elliott	Mr. Wm. Race
Mrs. Hargis	Mrs. Mattie Cass	Mrs. I. H. Burnums
Mrs. Burrows	Mrs. T. Hays	Mrs. A. J. Wessels
Mrs. H. C. Johns	Mrs. D. C. Lockwood	Mr. W. J. Condell
Mrs. Evans	Mrs. Mollie Carter	Mr. W. O. Jones
Miss Mattie Wells	Miss Ann Donald	Mr. Daniel Elwood
Mrs. Capt. White	Mr. Geo. Morehouse	Dr. S. T. Trowbridge
Mrs. Jamison	Mr. Wm. Crissey	Mr. I. Pugh
Miss Mollie Thatcher	Capt. Wm. Brown	Mr. Sewell
Capt. Daviss	Col. Tupper	
Mrs. Capt. Hays	Mr. Worth Bradley	

The following officers for the ensuing year were unanimously elected by ballot.

Mrs. Greer, President.

Mrs. Ryan, Vice President.

Mrs. Elliott, Secretary.

Mr. L. Burrows, Treasurer.

Annual Report of the Hospital Aid Society for 1862.

In response to a call made by the war department in a circular addressed to the women of the loyal states to grant relief to the sick and wounded soldiers of our army, the citizens of Decatur met in the Methodist church on the evening of November 18th, 1861, to take into consideration the best method of assisting the hospitals.

A committee was appointed to draft a constitution and report at the Baptist church the next day. The plan of organization submitted by the committee was unanimously adopted, and the society styled the "Sick and Wounded Soldiers' Aid Society." At a subsequent meeting the name was changed to "Hospital Aid Society," its present title. An executive committee was appointed consisting of four ladies and three gentlemen, one of which ladies was chosen as president, one as vice president, one as secretary and one as treasurer. Eight directresses were also appointed.

The principal part of the funds of the society have been appropriated to the purchase of material for articles of clothing to be used in hospitals. Several donations have been received amounting to near seventy dollars, this with the money raised in the usual manner, by festivals, sociables, etc., amounts to upwards of eight hundred dollars.

Since the battle of Fort Donelson the ladies of our society have visited the depot nearly every evening and given a comfortable supper to the sick and wounded soldiers passing through our town. The exact number who have been thus supplied has not been kept, but is estimated from the data on hand at 1200. Several sick soldiers who have been obliged to remain in town, not being able to meet connecting trains, have been provided for by the society. Small donations have been made by gentlemen on the trains, to be expended in books and tracts. The society has also received a donation of English and German books from the "Young Men's Christian Association," of Louisville, Kentucky. Before the government supplies were received by One Hundred and Sixteenth Reg. Ill. Vol. the society distributed to them one hundred and nine pieces of bed clothing—forty of these were donated by the county, the remainder

by citizens of the town and are all to be returned to the society when the regiment leaves. Sick and wounded soldiers returned from the army, unable to provide for themselves, have been cared for, and their wants relieved at the expense of the society. There is now on hand for future use, eighty-five yards muslin, two hundred and eighty yards calico and fifteen pounds yarn. A large box of supplies was received from the Aid society of Long Creek township and forwarded to Rolla. The society of this city have sent supplies to the hospitals of Cairo, Paducah and Jackson and the St. Louis sanitary commission, also one box by the Rev. S. G. Minor, chaplain of the Seventh Ill. Cavalry, and one box by Rev. Lock, chaplain of the Second Ill. Cavalry.

The following is a complete list of all articles sent since the organization of the society:

Pillow cases, 305	Towels, 269	Fans, 90
Sheets, 268	Handkerchiefs, 301	Prepared rags, 500 lbs.
Drawers, 261 pair	Pillow ticks, 37	Pins, 48 papers
Socks, 98 pair	Dressing gowns, 2	Castile soap, 18 lbs.
Pants, 1 pair	Pillows, 147	Common soap, 35 lbs.
Comforts, 67	Mosquito bars, 26	Fine combs, 84
Mattress ticks, 22	Army suit, 1	Coarse combs, 56
Slippers, 54	Arm pads, 119	Letter paper, 6 quires
Blankets, 10	Shirts, 239	Envelopes, 6 dozen
Coverlets, 1	Bandages, 1,000 rolls	Pickle, 2 barrels
Also lint, tracts, magazines, papers and books.		
Delicacies:		
Canned fruits, 66 quarts	Tomato catsup, 7 bottles	Potatoes, 9 bushels
Jelly, 20 jars	Domestic wine, 15 bottles	Codfish, 34 lbs.
Blackberry cordial, 2 bottles	Onions, 1½ bushels	Dried beef, 28 lbs.
Tamarins, yeast, tobacco and dried apples.		Bologna sausage, 10 lbs.

The report of the treasurer is not included in the minutes and much valuable history is lost. I have not been able to trace the treasurer's book.

Nov. 21st, 1862. Arrangements were made for a Thanksgiving Festival. Miss Mary Thatcher, Misses Emma and Sarah Powers and Miss Laura Allen were appointed a committee to canvas the town for donations.

Nov. 28th. It was recorded that the proceeds of a festival were \$178.50.

Friday, January 9th, it was decided to canvas only one ward at a time for provisions for the monthly sociables. The Third ward was asked to furnish cakes, etcetra, for the January sociable, Mrs. Greer, Mrs. Powers, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Hays to have charge of the coffee table. Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Thatcher, Mrs. Ennis and Mrs. Johns, the oyster table. Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Capen, Miss Sallie Taylor and Miss Wilder the ice cream.

Jan. 17th the proceeds of the sociable were set down as \$89.50.

Mr. Wessels donated camelias which were sold for \$14.85.

Donation from the German Turners was \$37.80.

Dr. Ira Barnes, surgeon of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Illinois Regiment, was at home and represented that the regiment was greatly in need of sanitary supplies. He expected to return to the army in a week, and would personally take to his regiment any supplies that the Aid Society could prepare.

March 27th, 1863, the hall was opened four days, the attendance was large and a great deal of work was accomplished. The regular monthly sociable was held Tuesday evening and \$67.50 was cleared.

March 30th the Society packed at the Masonic Hall boxes for the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment. (The contents of these boxes are included in the annual report.)

Entries in the minutes are as follows:

April 17, 1863. The attendance this month was not as large as usual. Arrangements were made for an April sociable. Coffee table Mrs. Johns, Hill and Elliott. Ice cream Mrs. Greer, Hays, Ryan and Evans.

April 25th. Net proceeds of sociable last night, \$51.45.

May 29th. Net proceeds of Col. Hawkins lecture, \$8.05.

May 26th. Received today an appeal from the sanitary commission at Springfield asking us to make a general effort throughout this county, to relieve the sick and wounded of our Army now before Vicksburg.

The president proposed that we issue an appeal to the people and have it circulated universally through the county.

The secretary in accordance with the above wrote the appeal and caused 500 cop. to be printed. Mr. Hammer and others caused them to be circulated throughout the town and county. Hardy Bros. offered their cellar to store the articles that might be donated by the people, also kept an exact account of all donations. The president also proposed that we give a strawberry and floral festival upon the 4th of June, which met the approbation of all, consequently arrangements were made to furnish the necessary articles for that occasion. The whole town was canvassed for strawberries, cream and flowers. The 2nd ward furnished the cake. Mrs. Fenton & Mrs. Johns were appointed to superintend the flower table. Mrs. Condell & Mrs. Elliott, ice cream table No. 1, Mr. Greer & Mrs. Smith, ice cream table No. 2, Mr. Lowber Burrows, Mr. J. K. Wasen, D. P. Hardy and several ladies appointed to decorate the hall. It is thought best to have 10 cts. admission.

June 5th. Festival last night was largely attended. Proceeds were as follows:

Door fee .....	\$47.00
Ice cream No. 1.....	73.00
Ice cream No. 2.....	69.50
Flower table .....	55.00
Donations .....	5.50
Net proceeds .....	250.00

June 5th. Mrs. Greer, Mrs. Ryan, Mrs. Elliott, G. M. Wood, C. C. Burroughs & Dr. Moore were invited to go to Blue Mound township to organize a Soldiers Aid Society. Went according to agreement. Society was formed. The people seemed to be very much interested in doing something to help the sick and wounded soldiers.

Monday, June 8th. Packed in Hardy Bros. store the following articles and forwarded them to the sanitary commission, Springfield. (List included in the annual report.)

June 9th, 1863. Sent to sanitary commission at Springfield \$133.50.

Mr. Olney assisted in packing boxes and marked and shipped them.

June 18th. Dr. Johns, Surgeon of the 129th Ill. Vol., asks for a box of hospital clothing. The executive committee voted that the society comply with Dr. Johns' request. (Articles sent are included in the annual report.)

July 31st. Sent another box to Springfield.

Aug. 7th. Sociable at Powers hall. Proceeds \$169.45.

Sept. 26th. Proceeds of sociable \$113.05. Regular meetings during the last two months have been well attended. Hall not opened during Fair week.

Oct. 16th. Arrangements made for the election of officers for the ensuing year. A nominating committee was apointed.

Oct. 22nd, 1863. The anniversary meeting of the society was held at Powers hall. The officers for the ensuing year were unanimously elected.

President—Mrs. E. J. Evans.

Vice President—Mrs. Ira Barnes.

Secretary—Mrs. H. C. Johns.

Treasurer—Mr. L. Burrows.

Directress—Mrs. J. Ryan, Mrs. Locke, Mrs. J. Mansfield, Mrs. T. Hays, Mrs. S. Smith.

Membership Fees .....\$14.00

Oyster Tables ..... 28.90

Donation ..... 1.50

A crayon portrait of Major General R. J. Oglesby was purchased by the society as a contribution to the North Western Fair. The Society Paid for it \$20. (The picture was one of the articles disposed of at the Sanitary Fair in Chicago by raffle, and was valued in their advertisement at \$50.)

"The second annual Report" is probably lost, only the title appearing in the book, but I have made the following synopsis of the work of the year:

Bed ticks, 14	Gooseberries, 8 gal.	Jam, 2 qts.
Sheets, 106	Peaches, 10 qts.	Potatoes, 3 bbls.
Pillows, 41	Comforts, 25	Cherries, 17 qts.
Drawers, 63	Sheets, 156	Raspberries. 8 qts.
Shirts, 96	Pillow cases, 141	Tomatoes, 9 gal.
Socks, pr., 28	Towels, 96	Pickles, 4 gal.
Napkins, 18	Slippers, pr., 10	Currants, 4 gal.
Fine combs, 14	Hdkfs., 30	Blackberry Wine, 5 btl.
Tape rolls, 16	Coarse combs, 12	Horse Radish, 1 qts.
Arm pads, 6	Papers pins, 18	Apple Butter, 8 gal.



Dried Beef, 13 lbs.      Books & Boxes, 3      Grape Wine, 5 btl.  
 Dried Apples, 1 bbl.    Bologna sausage, 10 lbs.    Butter, 44 lbs.

Proceeds of Festivals, etc.:

Nov. 27th .....	\$170.00	Col. Hawkin's lecture.....	8.05
Jan. 17, 1863.....	89.00	June 5th .....	250.00
German Turners .....	37.80	Aug. 7th .....	269.45
Donations .....	42.50	Sept. 28th .....	113.05
March 27th .....	67.00	Oct. 28th .....	45.00
April 25th .....	51.45		
Total .....			<u>\$1,143.30</u>

Mr. Barnwell offered the society the parlor of his photograph gallery as a place of meeting for the winter. The ante-room of the Odd Fellows Hall, across the hall, was also offered the society for a cutting and packing room. These offers were accepted with thanks, and it was "Resolved that our meetings will be held every Friday at Barnwell's Gallery."

Oct. 25th. Mrs. Johns was requested to visit the Hospitals at Nashville while in the city. "Twenty-four mugs filled with thirteen lbs. of butter, were sent by Mrs. Johns, to the Hospital of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Regiment Illinois Volunteers." (Dr. Johns had complained that "tin cups burned the lips.")

Nov. 3rd. Mr. George Baker presented a letter to the society from seven members of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment Illinois Volunteers who were prisoners on Belle Isle at Richmond asking for some provisions. It was resolved to furnish what they asked for and Mr. Baker was requested to purchase the articles and attend to their shipment.

Nov. 5th the society sent to prisoners at Richmond 7 lbs. Tobacco, 25 lbs. Rice, 23 lbs. Cheese, 1 bag Table Salt, 6 lbs. Pepper, 3 lbs. Castile Soap,  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. Thread, 3 Towels, 1 quire Paper, 2 doz. stamped envelopes, 25 lbs. B. Sausage,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. Dried Beef, 54 lbs. Bacon. Paid express charges on above \$14.30.

At the third annual Thanksgiving Festival the proceeds were: Door receipts \$42.95 (10 cts. admission), Supper tickets \$78.95, Oyster table \$53.25, Ice cream table \$43.35, Confectionary table \$69.45, Donation from Mr. Boardman \$10.00, Gross receipts \$278.00. The expenses for oysters, candy, nuts, sugar, cranberries, ice cream, scrubbing and dishwashing, printing and hall, were \$68.20, leaving net proceeds \$210.



## CHAPTER XV.

### AID SOCIETY'S BIGGEST YEAR.

During the winter of sixty-three and until August of sixty-four, the Aid Society met in Mr. Barnwell's gallery every Friday and upon several occasions of "rushwork" there were three and four meetings a week. There were but few sewing machines in town, but whenever there was an unusual demand for work, Mr. Race and Mr. Barber sent in sewing machines and a man to operate them. Miss Laura Allen also had a machine which she used regularly every Friday. Mrs. Johns' hand run machine had been in use almost every week for two years. A number of ladies had learned to work it, and it was almost as much the property of the "society" as was "Old Billy," Mrs. Johns' gentle and useful old horse.

An attempt was made to substitute a course of lectures for the monthly "sociables." Dr. Wm. Barnes, H. B. Durfee and J. S. Post were appointed a committee on lectures. The first lecture was delivered by Maj. Gen. Oglesby and netted \$30.50, which sum was appropriated to the Relief Society. Colonel Nathan Tupper, who was at home on sick leave, was to have delivered the second on January 22, but "the lecture was postponed on account of the sickness of the orator." On March 11 it is recorded that, "the funeral of Colonel Tupper prevented the usual meeting of the society." "The death of Colonel Tupper cast a gloom over the entire city." "The two brave and patriotic brothers, martyrs to the cause of liberty, now lie in Greenwood Cemetery, their monuments a perpetual reminder of the cost of the rebellion."

The omission of two monthly "sociables" had so depleted the treasury, (lectures having proved a failure) that on February 26 a "sociable" was given in Powers Hall. Five dollars and eighty cents had been "paid to soldiers wives for labor, and one

counterfeit \$10 bill somewhat reduced the amount deposited," but the proceeds clear of expenses were \$126.05.

February 26 the Society was "notified of the donation by Mr. I. R. Gibson, through Mr. Lowber Burrows, of four fine steel plate engravings handsomely framed." (Cole's Voyage of life.) The pictures were sold for \$25.

April 1 an entertainment of tableaux and music was given at Powers Hall and repeated the next evening with net proceeds of \$162.00.

These tableaux were artistic and beautiful. The costuming was done under the direction of Mrs. Livingstone and the setting of the tableaux by Mr. Lowber Burrows, as stage manager, would have done credit to any professional troupe of entertainers.

About this time constant and persistent calls were made upon the society by the Springfield Aid Society for clothing, bedding and other supplies for the hospital at Camp Butler. A committee was appointed to visit Springfield and Camp Butler, which committee advised that the stores we had on hand, and all that could be supplied within a month, ought to be sent to Camp Butler.

There had been a persistent effort to make political capital out of complications in the management of the Sanitary Commission. The "copperhead" press made grave charges of misappropriation of hospital stores by officers and surgeons. Letters from soldiers were published complaining that the "surgeons and nurses in the hospital were feasting on the fat of the land, while the poor privates saw nothing but "'sow belly' and hard tack."

The miscarriage of packages sent to particular regiments was made the basis of loud complaints against the Aid Society. For these reasons the executive committee of the Aid Society thought best to grant the request of the Springfield Society and join with them in work for the hospital at Camp Butler. There was some dissatisfaction with this decision. The desire to "do for our own men," overruled the expediency of using our stores for the general good, and individual efforts, independent of the Hospital Aid Society to send boxes to the One Hundred and Fifteenth and One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiments resulted in a total

failure, both the Christian and Sanitary Commission refusing to transport private shipments.

During the summer, gooseberries were canned, cherries dried, cordials and wines made, and many fresh vegetables sent to the Camp Butler Hospital.

The State Agricultural Fair was to be held in Decatur in September, and a proposition emanating from our society to hold a State Sanitary Fair in connection with it was sent to the State Sanitary Commission.

On "July 29 a number of ladies from our society met with a committee of ladies from Springfield and the State Board of Agriculture, at the Fair Grounds, to decide on the question of a State Sanitary Fair. A meeting of the State Sanitary Commission will be held here on August 9."

August 5 arrangements were made for entertaining the executive committee of the State Sanitary Fair, and also for a meeting of delegates from the County Aid Societies on next Friday. A committee was appointed to secure Powers Hall for the entire week of the Fair for the use of the Sanitary Fair.

"August 12. A committee of ladies from the Long Creek and Mount Zion Aid Societies met with us, to talk over arrangements for the State Fair."

So absorbing was the interest in the Sanitary Fair, that no meetings of the Aid Society were held for a month.

On "October 9, on motion of Mrs. Millikin, Mrs. Cass, Mrs. Condell and Mrs. Ryan were appointed a committee to nominate officers for the ensuing year."

October 14. It was decided to hold the annual meeting of the "Society next Friday. An oyster supper will be given at the same time. The committee on nominations reported. Mrs. Johns moved that the name of Mrs. Evans should be substituted for that of Mrs. Johns as candidate for President. The report of the committee as amended was accepted."

The names of officers nominated are not given.

"October 21. The annual meeting of the "Society" was held at Powers Hall. The evening was very stormy and the attendance of ladies small. One hundred and twenty-one persons be-

came members of the "Society" for the coming year. Of these, thirty-four were ladies and eighty-seven gentlemen. Only thirteen of the ladies registered have ever attended the meetings of the society, and at least three-fourths of the gentlemen are entirely new members and contributors."

For the first time since the organization of the Society there was an opposition ticket and we had our first lesson in practical politics. The new ticket made its first appearance at five o'clock on the afternoon of the election. It was announced that the polls would open at seven o'clock and close at nine. The majority of the new members filed into the hall, after eight o'clock, registered, paid their quarter and handed in their folded ballot. They then ordered oysters, which were paid for with a ten dollar bill, and took their departure, having for the first and last time participated in a meeting of the Hospital Aid Society.

The annual report follows:

Third Annual Report of the Decatur Hospital Aid Society.

During the past year this society has held forty-eight meetings for work. The attendance ranged from six to eighty-nine, the average being seventeen.

There has been made into hospital bedding and clothing, seven hundred and thirty-one yards of muslin, one hundred and thirteen of burlaps and ticking, seventy of calico, ninety-eight of crash and seventy-five of flannel. These articles have been sent to the army through the State Sanitary Commission. A large portion of the fruit and clothing was sent to the hospital at Camp Butler. A number of articles have been furnished sick soldiers at home.

Mr. Barnwell has furnished the "Society" a room for meeting with all necessary fuel and every comfort his gallery affords, free of charge. The officers of the "Society" are also under obligations to him for much assistance in forwarding and purchasing goods and many other favors. We wish also to present our thanks to the Odd Fellows, for the use of their ante-room for storing our goods. Mr. James Shoaff, of the Magnet, offered at the beginning of the year to do the printing of the society, and donate his bill. The society voted to accept this generous offer, and in accordance with this resolution Mr. Shoaff has printed and posted large and elegant hand-bills for our festivals and lectures. His receipted bill of \$60 was donated to the society this week, for which he has our thanks.

The treasury of the society has been replenished during the past year by three festivals, the net proceeds of which were \$416.00. On the first of April a number of young ladies connected with the society, gave two tableaux entertainments, and donated the proceeds of their efforts to the society.

During the winter an effort was made to substitute a course of lectures for the usual festivals given by the society, but the effort proved almost an entire failure. The fund produced by these lectures were \$33.05; \$29.30 of which has been expended for the relief of soldiers' families;

\$18 has been given to sick volunteers passing thro' the town, to assist them on their way; \$11.00 has been given to the sick volunteers at home.

The following articles have been shipped to Camp Butler and south through the Sanitary Commissions and to persons of the 119th regiment in prison at Richmond: Flannel shirts, 6; sheets, 82; feather pillows, 21; shirts, 45; flannel drawers, 25 pairs; cotton drawers, 40 pairs; bed sacks, 32; pillow ticks, 44; pillow cases, 136; comforts, 9; towels, 78; napkins, 54; handkerchiefs, 46; socks, 27 pair; mocassins, 10; coats, 9; vests, 1; 120 pounds prepared rags; 200 rolls bandages; 5 pounds lint; 161 quarts canned fruit; 4 pounds dried cherries;  $\frac{1}{2}$  bushel dried apples; 7 gallons pickles; 13 pounds butter; 6 pounds dried beef; 25 pounds bologna sausage; 5 pounds bacon; 25 pounds rice; 20 pounds cheese; 7 pounds tobacco; 6 pounds pepper; 1 sack salt; 3 pounds castile soap; 24 mugs; 3 quarts cordial; 2 dozen envelopes; 2 dozen postage stamps; 2 quires paper and large quantities of reading matter. A sick soldier was furnished with 2 pair drawers, 2 shirts and 2 pair socks. There is remaining on hand in the society 13 pair drawers, 16 towels, 19 sheets, 4 shirts and 40 quarts of canned fruit.

When three years ago this society was organized, it was supposed that a few weeks or months, at least, would be all that would be required. The least sanguine observer believed, that after the wants of the sick and wounded of the winter of 1862, that no more calls upon the benevolence and patriotism of our citizens would be made for the purpose of this society. When in the winter of '62 the president of the society offered her resignation, it was refused, because the labors of the society were supposed to be ended. But after 6 weeks rest, the battle of Shiloh proved to all, that so long as war raged, every loyal woman who loved her country and its brave defenders, must work. The society was again called together, and for three years have worked unremittingly. During these three years, \$2,500 in money has been raised by the society, through festivals, concerts, tableaux, etc. The value of articles contributed for hospital purposes will swell the amount of the direct contributions of our society to the comfort of these who have risked life and health in our defense, to over \$5,000. Nor is this sum all that the citizens of Decatur have contributed to this noble cause. Last year when the brave army before Vicksburg were calling upon the country for help in their extremity, \$15.00 was contributed to the fund for their relief through the efforts of our treasurer.

The great Sanitary Fair, which will add at least \$20,000 to the fund of our State Sanitary Commission, was first proposed in our society, and is largely indebted for its success to those who have always been our most active workers. Decatur contributed in cash to the fair, nearly \$2,100 and may well be proud of the part she may claim in its success. Nor must we deem our work ended here. Though other urgent calls upon our charities and labor will have to be met, we must not feel that because we have done so much, that we can do no more, every day and every hour adds to the number of those, who but for the labors of such societies as ours, would perish on the battlefield, from wounds received in our defense.

We are able to meet every demand our country makes upon us; our soldiers' families must be cared for, their orphans educated and their own wants supplied. We can do all, aye, we will do all this and more. Who in this community can say that he has been impoverished by the thousands of dollars which have been contributed by our citizens to this good work. Who has been deprived of one comfort, or even denied himself one luxury to contribute to this great end.

Yet, if sacrifices are needed, if our ladies must dispense with their



silks and jewels, if our tables must be deprived of a few of the luxuries under which they groan, that our soldiers' wives and children may be made comfortable, the sacrifice will be made. Never has the loyal heart of Decatur been appealed to in vain.

At the annual meeting of the society held on Friday evening, October 21, there were 121 persons became members of the society for the coming year. Of these 34 were ladies, and 87 were gentlemen.

A gratifying evidence of the new interest taken in the society is shown by the fact that only 13 of these have ever attended one working meeting of the last two years. Of the gentlemen who so patriotically gave their names, their quarters and their votes, more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  are entirely new contributors, and we hope that the soldiers will reap a rich harvest from the labors and contributions of these new members.

118 votes were cast, and the result was the election of the following officers:

Mrs. James Millikin, President.

Mrs. S. F. Greer, Vice President.

Mrs. Jack Jones, Secretary.

Mrs. J. R. Gorin, Treasurer.

Directresses, Mrs. Winholtz, Mrs. S. Smith, Mrs. Bright, Miss M. Carter, Mrs. S. Packard.

There was received as the proceeds of the annual meeting:

From membership fees.....	\$30.25
From Oyster and cider tables.....	50.10
	<hr/>
	\$80 35

The expenses were:

Hall rent .....	\$10.00
Oysters, cider, crackers, etc.....	16.40
	<hr/>
	\$26.40

Net proceeds .....	\$63.85
	<hr/>

Mrs. E. J. Evans, President.

Mrs. H. C. Johns, Sec.

Thus ended the most strenuous year's work of the Aid Society. The Sanitary Fair had taxed the strength and energy of its workers to their utmost extent. Ten social entertainments had been held in Powers Hall, each involving at least two days of hard labor on the part of those few who worked. There was always abundant help when the evening's entertainment began. The social and ornamental corps of workers was generally prompt, and for emergencies or rush work, there was a superabundance of help; but the appalling work required to purchase materials, distribute and superintend the work at the weekly meetings, prepare for a social entertainment once a month, visit the depot every evening, and relieve the wants of the soldiers' families had been faithfully performed by the same band of willing workers who, in 1861, had assumed the responsibility. I wish it were in my power to



render a proper tribute to their devotion. Their bond of sympathy was love of country, not family nor church nor social environment. The friendships so formed have lasted through life.

One of the most permanent, far reaching and important results of the war for the Union, was the emancipation of the Church from the shackles of sectarianism and the adoption of the Brotherhood of Man as one of the tenets of Christianity.

As women were compelled by necessity to burst the bonds of conventionality, so a common devotion to country, unconsciously swept away the narrow prejudices of creed and Christians of all denominations, worked together for God and our Native Land.

The first board of "Directresses" of the Hospital Aid Society was selected, one from each church. They met almost as strangers, without one thought of Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox or Universalist, sinner or saint. One common bond of patriotism welded them together in that charity which "beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" so that "we, being many, were one body in Christ, and every one members of one another."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### LAST YEAR OF AID SOCIETY.

At the last meeting of the Society, after the election of 1864, Mrs. S. F. Greer resigned her office of vice-president.

The secretary's book resumes the record on March 19th, 1865.

The weekly records of the proceedings of the Aid Society have not been kept as heretofore, owing to a failure in attendance on the part of the Secretary, but as minute and correct a report of the business of the first three months of this year as can be made from the notes preserved, will perhaps be satisfactory.

A festival was held on Thanksgiving eve., and in view of the anticipated suffering of the poor, aside from soldiers' families, (the legitimate objects of the Aid's beneficence) the proceeds were to be held separately, and used indiscriminately for their relief. The receipts were \$525.45, which were given in charge of Mr. Gorin, the treasurer of the Aid Society, subject to the orders of the ladies appointed to investigate and relieve the necessities of the unfortunate. That this duty was faithfully executed, the names of the ladies afford sufficient attestation. Mrs. Cass, Mrs. Libby, Mrs. Ryan, Mrs. Barber, Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Millikin, Mrs. Condell, Mrs. Wessels, and Mrs. Hays have indeed, been sisters of mercy, in the dispensation of food, raiment and fuel to those whose privations were real and distressing. Many, not members of the Aid Society, were zealous co-workers in this enterprise. The work did not interfere with the regular meetings of the society.

This is the first time the work of the Relief Society was recorded in the minutes of the Aid Society. I am very glad that this one record for three months has been preserved. It is a fair specimen of the character of the work done by the Aid society for three years, though conducted under another name and not reported in the records of the Society.

A list of the articles purchased and donated, will afford some idea of the amount of work accomplished in four months.

#### New Articles :

Shoes, 24 pr.  
Drawers, 28 pr.  
Dressing gown, 1  
Garibaldi, 1  
Coats, 2  
Unbleached shirting,  
33 yds.

Tea, eggs, beef, turnips,  
etc., (for sick)  
Boots, 2 pr.  
Chemise, 28  
Aprons, 45  
Jeans, 38 yds.  
Linsey shirts, 6  
Striped shirting, 33 yds.  
Dresses, 27  
Hose, 63 pr.  
Boys' caps, 10  
Linsey, 26½ yds.  
Delaine, 23 yds.  
Muslin, 170 yds.  
Thread, buttons, etc.  
Meal, 6 bushels

Drilling, 8 yds.	Flannel, 7 yds.	Washboiler
Wood, 15 loads	Flour, 26 sacks	

Second hand articles, repaired at expense of Society and distributed:

Shoes, 58 pr.	Aprons, 58	Hose, 78 pr.
Hoods, 91	Sacques, 9	Children's dresses, 5
Pants, 29	Shawls, 7	Sheets, 5
Hats, 7	Coats, 22	Nubias, 1
Tippets, 2	Shakers, 5	Small blankets, 6
Boots, 3 pr.	Blankets, 2	Shirts, 2
Dresses, 11	Bed quilts, 2	
Muslin, 18 yds.	Nightgowns, 3	

The whole amount has been expended according to the best judgment of those, whose laborious duty it was to serve as almoners to such as must have perished, without assistance.

The regular Friday meetings of the Society have been well attended. One box has been sent to the Soldiers' Home, Springfield, earnest solicitations for assistance having reached us from there. Contents of box as follows:

Dressing gown, 1	Shirts, 39	Drawers, 13 pr.
Sheets, 22	Pillow cases, 30	Towels, 16
Bandages, 37	Magazines, 37	Bundle lint, 1
Bundle rags, 6	Newspapers, 34	Handkerchiefs, 7
Coat, 1	Socks, 22 pr.	

As the result of two evening sociables, held at Powers Hall, we have \$209.79, clear of expenses. As usual, expenses were much reduced by donations.

Prof. Wilber assisted the Society to the extent of \$30.64, being half the proceeds of a lecture delivered for that purpose.

Two donations of \$5 each were received.

Ten dollars were given to a soldier's wife who was going to Arkansas Post, to her husband, \$15 to another who wished to go to friends in Ohio.

The use of Macon Hall, free of charge, has been tendered by Messrs. Dodson and Priest for any sociable or entertainment the Aid Society may wish to give.

New members were enrolled.

March 17, 1865. Society rooms open for work, 27 ladies present. A letter was read by the secretary, from Mrs. Tilton, Soldiers' Home, Springfield.

Mrs. Jones, secretary, sent in her resignation. It was accepted and Mrs. R. H. Murphy chosen to fill the vacancy.

It was decided by a majority of the ladies present to send the box then ready to be packed to the Christian Commission. Accordingly, a box was packed and shipped, 20th inst., to the Christian Commission, containing the following articles. (List included in semi-annual report.)

March 24. 20 ladies present. A box containing 62 qts. canned fruit was sent to Soldiers' Home, Springfield, Ills. 25 inst.

March 31. Sec. read a letter from Mrs. Tilton, Springfield, acknowledging the box of canned fruit sent, and soliciting all kinds of sanitary stores, there being now at Camp Butler thirteen hundred sick soldiers.

Resolved, To raise money for Society by direct solicitation, rather than by festival or other entertainment. Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. Wessels, Mrs. Litten, the Misses Harwood, Mitchell, Smith, Miller, and Cowgill were appointed solicitors.

April 14. The propriety of sending a delegation of ladies to visit

Camp Butler and the Soldiers' Home, Springfield, was discussed. It was thought, as we were sending most of our supplies there, it would be proper to see how they were dispensed, and that becoming acquainted with the matrons and managers would give greater zest to our work. Four ladies were appointed to go next week.

April 21. The ladies who went to Springfield carried a basket of delicacies to the soldiers. The officers of the Society have donated to the Christian Commission \$50, there being an urgent call for money after the fall of Richmond; also \$8 to help an old lady to friends in Ind.

April 28. Our canvassers who have been soliciting funds, have raised about \$300.

May 5. A box of reading matter has been sent south, through the Sanitary Commission.

A box containing 19 qts. of canned fruit has also been sent to Springfield.

May 19. The last meeting of the society was held today, at Mrs. Millikin's. While all rejoiced that there no longer existed any urgent need for our labors, it was with some sadness the Society was disbanded. We have worked together long and hard, but it has been a labor of love.

#### SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AID SOCIETY.

The ladies of the Society have been untiring in their labors for the soldiers, during the past six months, as heretofore. Indeed their zeal to provide for the comfort of our heroes, and to do them honor, seems to wax warmer and warmer as they contemplate the near approach of the close of their labors, in this department.

Those not acquainted with the operations of the Society will be surprised at the amount of labor performed.

The principle upon which the Hospital Aid Society of Decatur has worked has not been a flash to die out when the excitement that goaded it on ceased, but it has been that steady flame of patriotism which burns brightest, longest and purest in a true woman's heart. The terrible sacrifices which the loyal woman of the north have made during the last four years, will not have been in vain. It will tell upon the generation soon to take the place of our brave heroes in the field, and legislative halls, our citizen soldiery, and martyred dead. It is she who will teach your sons patriotism—such patriotism as the world seldom sees. She has felt and suffered. How much, God alone knows, and she cannot soon forget. Her hands have not been taught to war nor her fingers to fight, (nevertheless, they have not been idle), but her heart has been taught to feel, and it is this feeling which prompts her to action. So long as she has a country to love, she will love it. So long as her country has sons to suffer, she will work. This has been the motive power in the Aid Society. It did not run well for a while and then die out.

It is due to the ladies who met weekly to ply the busy needle, to say that their labors will compare favorably with what has been done in the same length of time in any previous year, unless it be the first year. All praise to the working members of the Society, and that number has not been small. The meetings have been well and regularly attended, the average being 28, an increase of 11 over the average attendance of last year.

The following is a summary of the amounts distributed by the Society and the amount of work performed.

To Christian Commission \$50.

To soldiers' families to help reach friends in different states, \$32.

421 articles of second hand clothing have been repaired and distributed to soldiers' families.

247 new articles of clothing, 356 yds. of cloth, 15 loads of wood, 28 sacks of flour, 6 bu. of meal, and tea, beef, turnips, onions, etc., also \$37 for medicine for the sick.

The following articles have been sent to the hospitals through the Sanitary Commission, and managers of the Soldiers' Home, Springfield.

Shirts, 112	Drawers, 30 prs.	Sheets, 112
Pillowcases, 148	Towels, 122	Bundle lint, 1
Socks, 57 pr.	Coat, 1	H'dk'f's, 50
Bundles rags, 23	Rolls bandages, 206	Comforts, 18
Slippers, 32	Arm pads, 17	Napkins, 55
Vests, 3	Dressing gown, 1	Dried apples, 3 pecks
Pillows, 25	Tobacco, 8 lbs.	Bottle of wine, 1
Dried peaches, 2 lbs.	Dried berries, 12 lbs.	Pepper, 6 lbs.
Canned fruits, 86 qts.	Sardines, 2 bx.	Castile soap, 4 lbs.
Cheese, 23 lbs.	Salt, 2 sacks	Bologna sausage, 21 lbs.
Rice, 26 lbs.	Dried beef, 7 lbs.	Magazines, 89
Envelopes, 4 doz.	Letter paper, 2 qrs.	
Papers, 378	Bed ticks, 40	

The treasury of the Society has been replenished by the proceeds of two festivals, donations to the amount of \$60 & \$95.17 received from young misses, half of which was to be distributed to the poor. Also about \$300 have been secured by direct solicitation, and our thanks are due to the gentlemen who so liberally responded to the call. It is hoped the time is very near when such calls upon the liberality of our citizens will cease.

The thanks of the society are particularly due to Messrs. Harrison and Maxey for furnishing a room for meeting, with all the conveniences their gallery afforded; and to Messrs Priest and Dodson for offering their hall free of charge.

The Society voted to distribute the few articles of clothing and some material on hand to the poor, and a committee was appointed for that purpose.

A few little articles belonging to the society were voted to the different members, the stencil plate to Mrs. Libbey, the needle book to Mrs. Millikin, and the secretary's book to myself.

Signed,

Mrs. James Millikin, Pres.

Mrs. R. H. Murphy, Sec.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE STATE SANITARY FAIR.

The political campaign of 1864 was a peculiarly bitter one. No effort was spared by the opposition to discredit Mr. Lincoln, the Army or the Sanitary Commission and so persistent were the charges of graft and dishonesty in the disposition of the gifts of the people to the suffering soldiers, that the revenues of the Commission had seriously decreased. The demand for hospital supplies was greater than ever before and the friends of the soldiers believed that some extraordinary effort was necessary to prevent serious suffering.

The annual fair of the State Agricultural Society furnished the State Sanitary Commission with a fine occasion for presenting their claims to the generous people. "At a meeting of the State Agricultural Society, held at the fair grounds in Decatur July 29, 1864, it was resolved to sanction the connection of a Sanitary Fair with the Agricultural Fair to be held in Decatur from Sept. 12 to 17 and to give all possible aid and encouragement to the enterprise."

On August 6 the State Sanitary Board met at Springfield and effected an organization and appointed Dr. H. C. Johns chairman of an executive committee, the members of which were, Mrs. Governor Yates of Springfield, Mrs. Gen. Oglesby of Decatur, Mrs. Gen. J. D. Webster of Chicago, Mrs. W. H. Van Epps of Dixon, Mrs. Judge Trumbull of Chicago, Mrs. E. H. Beebe of Galena, Mrs. L. Tilton of Springfield, Mrs. I. R. Woods of Alton, Mrs. J. P. Reynolds of Springfield, Mrs. A. C. Weagley of Orleans, Mrs. Paul Selby of Jacksonville, Mrs. W. Pickerell of Mechanicsburg, Mrs. E. J. Bancroft of Jacksonville, Mrs. H. N. Stoddard of Waverly, Miss Mary J. West of Galesburg, Mrs. James Jones of Decatur, Mrs. E. J. Evans of Decatur, Mrs. Slaughter of Decatur, Mrs. Barber of Decatur, Mrs. William H.



Ennis of Decatur, and Mrs. Dr. Johns of Decatur to make arrangements for this fair.

Col. John R. Woods, secretary of the board of commissioners, issued a circular to the people of the State, announcing that the "Directors of the State Sanitary Commission earnestly wishing to increase their facilities for a more vigorous and extensive prosecution of the work committed to their management, propose to open a sanitary department at the State Agricultural Fair which will be held in Decatur from the 12th to the 17th days of September."

The circular was a long and patriotic appeal to the people of the State, "calling attention to the work and its object," and soliciting their earnest and active efforts for the accomplishment of the work and inviting attention to the following outline of the plan it was proposed to pursue.

Contributions of articles that will be on exhibition at the Agricultural Fair are solicited from every department to the Sanitary commission.

It is understood that to all donated articles, additional cards will be attached, having on them the donors' names, the price at which he or she may value them, and indicating the sacred use to which they are set apart.

These donated articles will remain in their respective places, subject to the regulations of the fair. They should be shipped to the care of Dr. H. C. Johns, Decatur.

A large and commodious hall will be erected for the reception of sanitary supplies. It will be beautifully decorated and so arranged that a space will be devoted to each of over one hundred counties, presenting a grand and novel sight. Connected with this will be a museum of trophies, gathered from every battlefield where our brave sons have fallen, adorned with the tattered and bullet-pierced flags of their regiments—the honored and priceless symbols of their loss and their glory. Other objects of historic interest will be added as opportunities may admit. Everybody should be trying to collect specimens that will add beauty or novelty to the display.

Clerks will be appointed who will keep a register for each township and county of all contributions made by its citizens, including those on exhibition in the several departments, so that the aggregates from any county or township may be ascertained on examination. County or township pledges will also be entered in this register of articles not brought to the fair, but actually contributed and pledged by responsible parties, to be held subject to the call of the commission. A record of results will be made up from these registers and published and mailed to contributors. All donated articles which cannot be used for sanitary purposes will be sold at the valuation of the donors, at such times as will not interfere with the rules of the fair; but a public auction of machinery, stock, and other contributions, which to be made available must be converted into money, will be held at stated intervals during the fair.

The first meeting of the committee was held at Decatur August 9, and at which the following organization was adopted:

Officers.

Hon. Richard Yates, President.

Hon. O. M. Hatch, Vice President.

Hon. Jesse K. Dubois, Vice President.

Hon. Alex Starne, Vice President.

Honorary Members—Lieutenant General U. S. Grant, Major General John M. Palmer, Major General J. A. McClernand, Major General David Hunter, Major General S. A. Hurlbut, Major General R. J. Oglesby, Major General John A. Logan, Major General B. M. Prentiss, Major General John Pope.

Sanitary Board—John P. Reynolds, President; E. B. Hawley, Vice President; John Williams, Treasurer; Robert Irwin, William Butler, A. C. Fuller, Adjutant General; J. R. Woods, Recording Secretary.

State Board of Agriculture—J. N. Brown, Ex-President; C. W. Webster, Ex-President; H. C. Johns, Ex-President; Lewis Ellsworth, Ex-President; W. H. Van Epps, President; Charles H. Rosenteil, Vice President; A. J. Mattson, R. H. Whiting, R. A. Holder, James W. Singleton, A. B. McConnell, William Kyle, William S. Wait, H. S. Ozburn.

Executive Board—Dr. H. C. Johns, President; Alonzo Burgess, Secretary; Lowber Burrows, Treasurer. General Corresponding Secretaries, Mrs. H. C. Johns, Mrs. James Millikin.

A corresponding secretary for each congressional district was appointed, as follows: First district, Mrs. Hosmer, Chicago; second, Mrs. J. N. Cunningham, Rockford; third, Miss M. Murtfeldt, Mt. Sterling; fourth, Mrs. A. J. Morton, Quincy; fifth, Miss M. J. West, Galesburg; sixth, Mrs. Henshaw, Ottawa; seventh, Mrs. Scroggs, Champaign; eighth, Mrs. L. Cavender, Eureka; ninth, Mrs. Colonel Judy, Tallula; tenth, Miss H. Leighton, Manchester; Eleventh, Mrs. G. W. Phillips, Centralia; twelfth, Mrs. N. E. Draper, Alton; thirteenth, Mrs. Frances D. Gage, Carbondale.

A long list of names of both men and women were added to the executive committee, representing every county in the state.

Mrs. C. P. Chase and Colonel T. P. Robb were appointed by the commission to canvass the state, soliciting donations, and calling the attention of the people to the fair.

Governor Yates, as president of the fair, promised every assistance from the state department, and with his usual alacrity in doing everything in his power to aid in sustaining and cheering our soldiers in the field, issued the following appeal:

STATE OF ILLINOIS, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,  
Springfield, Aug. 11, 1864.

To the people of the state of Illinois:

It has already been announced to you that a state sanitary fair will be held on the ground and during the annual exhibition of the Illinois State Agricultural society, at Decatur, Sept. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, 1864.

In view of the necessities of the case and demands of the hour, I do earnestly call upon you to respond with cheerful hearts and liberal hands to the appeals made to you in behalf of our brave soldiers in the field.

Let every loyal man and every loyal woman of Illinois contribute to the utmost of his or her ability, in needed articles and in money, to the sacred purposes and objects of the fair.

Who can be more worthy of your contributions than the sick and wounded soldier in the field or in the hospital, or his distressed family at home?

Many good, patriotic and benevolent gentlemen and ladies throughout the state are devoting their time and efforts to make the sanitary fair worthy of the state of Illinois and of the brave armies she has sent into the field.

All the flags of the old regiments, tattered and bullet-pierced, which have been borne proudly over so many glorious battle fields, besides rebel flags and trophies of various kinds taken from the enemy, will be assigned a special department in the fair, and will richly repay the visitors from the most distant part of the state.

Come, then, from the shores of the lakes and rivers, from all our prairies and groves, and pour rich treasures into the hands of the sanitary board for the relief of our soldiers, and all who love the country will rise up and call you blessed.

RICHARD YATES, Governor.

The plan of operations decided upon by the committee was to secure, as far as possible, the entire victualing privileges of the fair grounds, and to solicit donations of provisions to supply this department. For this purpose the dining hall upon the fair grounds, and six refreshment booths, were rented of the Macon County Agricultural society. Soldiers' Aid Societies from different parts of the state were solicited to take charge of these booths, each society furnishing everything consumed in its department, and conducting it to suit themselves, and rendering the net proceeds to the treasurer of the fair.

It was also decided to build a large hall, to be called Sanitary Bazaar and Museum, in which should be exhibited and sold all articles donated to the fair; also, all the battle flags, trophies, curiosities, etc., which could be collected, making this department one of special interest. Donations of articles exhibited at the State Agricultural fair were solicited, and a systematic plan for canvassing the state was adopted, by which every county and township might be reached. A circular letter was addressed to some prominent gentleman in each county of the state, requesting him to act as agent for his county in appointing committees to canvass every township and also to keep a record of the donations from his county, and report to the secretary of the fair.

The following circular of instructions to canvassing committees was adopted and forwarded to all parts of the state:

Decatur, Aug. 12, 1864.

You are requested by the executive committee of the state sanitary fair, to solicit in your neighborhood donations to this cause. It is desired to make this the people's fair, and that every individual in the state shall have an opportunity to contribute according to his ability.

A call upon every laboring man is made for the proceeds of one day's labor; every mechanic for some specimen of his skill; every farmer for something from the abundant resources of his farm; every business man for something amounting to the profits of one day's business. Ask of grocers such articles from their stock as will be useful in the dining hall or refreshment stalls; ask from every housekeeper something from her kitchen or garden, if nothing more than a bundle of rags or a few onions, beets or cabbages.

From counties where the railroad communication with Decatur is direct, special efforts should be made to secure such things as are needed in the dining hall and refreshment booths. Beef, pork or mutton can be sent alive to Decatur, where it can be butchered, or, if the weather will allow it, in places not too remote, could be butchered and sent in quarters. Large quantities of cake of every kind should be baked and carefully packed to send. Cider and apples in large quantities are wanted. Articles too bulky for shipment to Decatur, and not useful to the Sanitary Commission, (such as hay, grain or wood,) should be sold at the nearest market, and a certificate of the amount of sale given to the donor, and a list of such sales, with the money, sent to the chairman of your county committee, to be added to the aggregate of your county donations, and forwarded to L. Burrows, treasurer of the state sanitary fair, Decatur, Ill.

You can secure pledges for the future delivery of fruits, vegetables, etc., subject to the order of the state sanitary commission, and add the value of pledged articles to your list.

Useful and fancy articles for the sanitary bazaar, with pictures and other works of art, should be contributed.

It is desirable that a report of the probable amount of contributions of provisions for the dining hall and refreshment stalls should be sent to

Decatur as early as possible, in order that the committee can make arrangements to fill up deficiencies.

Please enter upon the work as early as possible.

Respectfully,

H. C. Johns,

Chairman Executive Committee.

Alonzo Burgess, Secretary.

Thus was inaugurated this great undertaking, with but four weeks to do the entire work. During this time locations for the hall and booths were selected, the buildings planned, erected and decorated, contracts made for supplies, contributions solicited and preparations made to entertain the large numbers of delegates who by invitation, became the guests of the Decatur Hospital Aid Society.

Local committees were appointed, each to take control of a special department of the work. Business men, mechanics, laborers and house keepers, gave a stipulated number of hours each day to the preparations for the fair.

Eight boys with four one horse delivery wagons volunteered to report at the fair grounds every morning to "fetch and carry."

A corps of about twenty young ladies was organized to act as general utility committee and reported either at the fair grounds or to the corresponding secretary every day, to be assigned to whatever work was found for them to do. This committee secured lodging and breakfast for eighty delegates. Almost immediately, letters of inquiry began to pour in on the corresponding secretary. The questions were so varied and referred to so many different subjects that it was impossible to adopt a circular form of an answer, so each individual letter had to receive a specific reply. I have before me a letter addressed to Mrs. Philips, the chairman of the Egyptian Booth, which closes thus. "Excuse the briefness of this letter, it is midnight and I have been writing steadily for five hours."

On Monday morning, September 12, every thing was ready for the throng of visitors who had commenced to arrive the Saturday before, and on Tuesday, September 13, the fair was formally opened by an address from Governor Yates.

Secretary Wood, in transmitting the report of the executive committee of the fair to John P. Reynolds, President of the State Sanitary Commission, says:



The management and results of this combined effort of the friends of the soldier to promote the sanitary cause, are fully set forth in the comprehensive report of its executive committee.

The annual fair of the Illinois State Agricultural society furnished the sanitary commission with a fine occasion for presenting the claims of their enterprise to the general people of the state, and, while they feel satisfied that the sanitary departments contributed largely to swell the receipts of the Agricultural society, they are not insensible to the obligations they are under to the society's excellent liberal executive board, for the privilege of occupying for the purpose, the beautiful Fair Park of Decatur, and the facilities and encouragement given them on every hand.

To the great-hearted and whole-souled inhabitants of that flourishing city is our cause indebted for innumerable and valuable favors. Its leading citizens, upon the first announcement from this office that it was determined to hold a sanitary fair on their magnificent grounds, went to work with alacrity, and, in conformity with a request of the sanitary board, organized a most efficient executive committee, and, in a short time, effected a most complete arrangement. The entire control was placed in their hands; and although they had but four weeks in which to complete their preparations, everything seemed to be done that was necessary.

The principal correspondence between the executive committee and this office was conducted on their behalf by Mrs. Dr. H. C. Johns, and to her indefatigable exertions must be attributed a large share of the success that attended the undertaking.

In submitting the report of the action of the executive committee, appointed by your board, to conduct the sanitary department of the late state fair, great difficulty exists in giving the exact history of the sources of receipts, etc. As the time for organization was so short, and the work one of such magnitude, much confusion necessarily exists in recording the action of many portions of the state.

The sanitary hall, a building in the form of a cross, with an area of eight thousand feet, was decorated with evergreens and festooned with red, white and blue. Nearly fifty war-worn banners, which have been returned to the state as sacred relics and mementoes of the valor of Illinois soldiers, were hung in conspicuous positions, and almost every victory of the war was found emblazoned upon these honored historians of the great struggle for liberty and good government. Many trophies captured from our enemies added to the interest of this department of the fair. The tables were filled with specimens of the skill and industry of the ladies of the state.

The young ladies of the Springfield High School Aid society occupied the booth in the center of the hall, with a magnificent display of fancy and useful articles, from the sale of which they reported to the treasurer, \$475.25.

Knox and LaSalle Counties occupied the eastern wing of the hall with a fine display. Although but a few weeks had elapsed since a fair for the same purpose had been held at Galesburg in Knox county, yet Knox county contributed \$5,606.93, and as a county stands at the head of contributors to this fair. Miss Mary A. West, the indefatigable corresponding secretary for the fifth congressional district, has proved that a systematic effort is all that is necessary to keep up a constant flow of benefactions into the treasury of the sanitary commission.

(The Galesburg D. A. R. have responded to our request for statistics of "what the women did" in the war, with a very full



and interesting report from that society which will be found in the supplement.)

The LaSalle county Ladies' association, represented by Mrs. I. V. A. Hors, and Mrs. George Avery of Ottawa, contributed a large number of beautiful articles, and reported to the treasurer, \$342.80 as the proceeds of their sales. They also sent donations to the Southern Illinois fair, held at Sparta, and the Western Fair held at Quincy. Mrs. Henshaw, secretary of their society, reports the entire amount of donations from LaSalle county at \$1,429.50, seven hundred and thirty-one dollars of which was hospital stores sent to Memphis.

The northern portion of the hall was occupied by the ladies of Decatur, and by promiscuous donations from other portions of the State. Mrs. Col. Judy of Menard county and Mrs. L. R. Cavender of Woodford county, assisted in the care of this portion of the hall, each contributing from their counties many valuable fancy articles. A revolutionary quilt, donated by Mrs. Cavender, to be presented to Mr. Lincoln, Gen. Fremont or Gen. McClellan, as the votes of the people, at fifty cents a vote, should decide, was sent to the Quincy fair for further exhibition. The proceeds of this voting was \$150.50.

The contributions of the Quincy Needle Pickets, and of the Long Creek Aid society of Macon county, added largely to the beauty and value of the display in this department. The splendid tea-set presented by Mrs. William H. Ennis, the feather bed presented by Mrs. Prather, the fine display of green house plants by Mr. Wessels, with many other beautiful things of less note, proved that the citizens of Decatur would not be out-done by those of any other city in the state.

One-half of this wing of the building was occupied by a portion of the machinery donated to the fair. Stafford's cultivator presented by Messrs. Barber & Hawley, occupied a prominent place. Near it were two Brown's corn planters, one presented by the manufacturer and patentee, Mr. George W. Brown, the other by the employes in Mr. Brown's shop. A number of plows, pumps, and bee hives took up the remaining room upon this table, at the head of which stood one of Messrs. Fairbanks & Greenleaf's finest scales, which was donated to the fair.

Messrs. Wheeler & Wilson, Messrs. Grover & Baker, Messrs. Wilcox & Gibbs and Mr. Singer each had on exhibition a sewing machine which was donated to the fair. They also gave part proceeds of other machines sold at the hall.

The west wing was occupied by the "Peoria Ladies' Loyal League". the "Egyptian Booth" and a soda fountain, which was placed in the hall by D. B. Brown of Decatur, and which produced \$60, net profit, to the fair.

The Peoria booth did honor to the ladies in charge, in its fine display of fancy articles. No full report has been received from Peoria county by the secretary of the fair, but the receipts as credited to that county, amount to \$430. An interesting report from Peoria will be given later.

At the "Egyptian Booth" the display of fancy articles, fine articles, fine fruits, etc., proved to all that Egypt is behind no other portion of the state, either in good taste, liberality or patriotism. This fancy booth was a branch of the Egyptian refreshment booth, which occupied a portion of the south wing of the hall. Here the ladies of Southern Illinois furnished "meals at all hours". Hot tea and coffee, hot oysters, and a great abundance of such other refreshments as could be sent daily from their source of supply at home, were dispensed with liberal hands and smiling faces. The difficulty of keeping up supplies from their distant

fountain head reduced the amount of their profits. Yet the receipts of the Egyptian booth did honor to that portion of the state. The treasurer's report shows five hundred dollars to the credit of this booth.

Mrs. Eliza D. Phillips of Columbus, Ohio, who was chairman of the Egyptian booth, kindly sent me seven of the letters, I had written to her, in September, 1864, regarding the preparations for the fair, and also a letter with some interesting and amusing incidents of the week of the fair which you will find in the supplement.

Vermillion County occupied one refreshment stall in this wing of the hall. The ladies in charge of this booth had made arrangements to make large quantities of ice cream, and came provided with an abundance of cake and other accompaniments of an ice cream stand, but the unfortunate difficulty of procuring a supply of milk deranged their entire plan of operations, thus lessening the amount of their receipts. This county, however, rendered a noble account of herself. The treasurer's account shows fifteen hundred and four dollars and fifty cents from that source.

One-half of the south wing of the hall was occupied by the "Champaign County Restaurant." Here nearly half as many persons were furnished with meals as at the large dining hall. The admirable system by which so great an amount of labor was performed at so little expense, does great credit to those in charge. The lady managers gave all soldiers who called on them their meals free of charge, and placed the ladies who were at work in other portions of the hall under obligations for hot coffee and other refreshments "without money and without price." Mrs. Scroggs, their efficient secretary, reports the total receipts at \$2,349.35 and \$257.43 as their expenditures.

Near the entrance of the Champaign booth Messrs. Clark and Utter of Rockford had placed one of their cider mills, which they kept in constant operation. They purchased apples and made cider, which they sold, giving the net proceeds, amounting to eighty-nine dollars and twenty cents, to the fair.

McLean county occupied a booth on the west side of the fair grounds, near Art Hall, as their especial field of labor, which they made very attractive by shady bowers and seats, thus inviting the

hungry and weary to rest and refreshment. Their management was equal to the occasion, and the result satisfactory to themselves and the executive committee of the fair. McLean county booth was the favorite resort of the great crowd in attendance, and their report shows an aggregate of four thousand six hundred and one dollars and eighty-six cents.

The only remaining refreshment booth under the control of the sanitary fair was one near the business office, in a beautiful grove, which was occupied by the ladies of Long Creek Aid society of Macon County. While other refreshment booths had whole counties to call upon for provisions and aid, this booth was supplied entirely by the Aid society of one township. The amount of the receipts and the popularity of the booth, fully attest the ability and liberality with which it was conducted. Mrs. M. I. Davis, the secretary of the society, reports receipts at booth, \$787; expenses, \$265; donations to dining hall, provisions, \$40; articles to the bazaar, \$35; goods on hand, \$19; total benefits to the sanitary fair, \$613. The ladies of this society requested to retain this amount in their own possession to purchase material for hospital stores. They hoped thus to greatly increase the value of their donations during the winter.

A short letter from Mrs. Mary A. Stickel, who was President of the Long Creek Aid Society, will also appear in the supplement.

In order to make the evening amusements of the people visiting the state fair tributary to the funds of the sanitary fair, Powers' hall, the only one capable of being used for the purpose, was engaged for the week. On Monday evening a juvenile concert was given, conducted by Prof. Murphy of Decatur. This gentleman, who was blind, generously gave three afternoons each week for three weeks preparing a class of little girls for this concert, and full credit did the little fairies do his training. They sang many patriotic songs, in excellent style, drawing forth the unbounded applause of the audience. The receipts of this concert were fifty-one dollars and fifty cents.

On Tuesday evening the Decatur Musical Union gave one of their recherche and delightful concerts, to a highly appreciative audience. The receipts were \$89.90.

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings the hall was occupied by the Quincy Needle Pickets, in a mixed entertainment of tableaux and music. The hall was filled to overflowing both nights, and the most enthusiastic admiration of the entire performance was expressed by those who were fortunate enough to gain admittance. These two entertainments netted \$364.40 to the treasury of the fair.

The agricultural ball on Friday evening was an elegant affair. The receipts were \$206.25.

Early in the summer the dining hall upon the fair grounds had been rented by the State Agricultural Society, to Mr. H. Goodman of Decatur for \$1,050. A committee was appointed to negotiate for the rent of this hall, who reported that it could only be had by paying a premium of \$300 for the contract. The amount seemed large for the use of the tenement for one week, but the proposition was accepted, and the place secured, at the rent of \$1,350. In addition to this rent, the committee were compelled, by the contract, to furnish all the officers, committees and laborers of the State Agricultural Society with meal tickets, at the rate of 33  $\frac{1}{3}$  cents each.

The ladies of Sangamon County generously undertook the management of this department. Mrs. E. J. Evans, Mr. S. F. Greer and Mrs. Henry Prather of Decatur were added to this committee, and labored faithfully during the two weeks to assist the ladies of Sangamon with their laborious and responsible task.

The dining hall was two stories high, the upper story had been occupied at former fairs as a lodging room for employes and the ladies from Sangamon County decided that they would camp for fair week, in that room. It would be necessary that they be upon the ground early and late, so they declined the hospitality of the ladies of Decatur and furnishing their own bed clothes, made their beds from a thick layer of straw placed on the floor. Two corners were curtained off for toilet rooms and they offered to share their "political quarters" with Egypt and McLean County.

This arrangement left open for hospitable purposes, many of the Decatur homes where permanent guests had been expected.

Fresh relays of young ladies from Springfield came up every

day to "wait tables." They were dressed in white with red sashes and blue caps.

There was not an evening during the week when some of the tired out workers did not welcome an invitation from Decatur ladies to accept a comfortable bed in exchange for their couch of straw. Very soon the necessity of adding at least one Decatur woman to the committee at every booth where refreshments were served became evident. There was something lacking every day and only home talent could supply the required information regarding sources of supply.

There were many trying but amusing episodes connected with this undertaking. The milk problem was a serious one. Mr. James N. Brown of Berlin, Sangamon county, offered to solve the problem for the dining hall, by driving into a pasture adjoining the fair grounds a herd of twelve milk cows and furnishing a man to milk them. Then all the milk that could be supplied by the cows on exhibition at the Agricultural Fair was pledged to the McLean and Egyptian booths. Mr. Brown's cows arrived on Sunday and furnished an abundant supply of milk for Monday and Tuesday, but on Wednesday morning it was found that "some one had left the gate open" and the cows were enroute to Springfield. Men on horseback were sent in pursuit, and found the entire herd corralled in a barn yard near Illiopolis. It was expected Wednesday would be the big day of the fair, *and no milk*. Black despair filled the hearts of the dining room committee. Before eight o'clock, Mrs. Greer arrived upon the scene and was importuned for relief. She put a boy on horseback with a note to me which read:

"Not a drop of milk for the dining hall. Leave everything else and start out to beg, buy or borrow every pint of milk in Decatur."

I was just dressing my two little girls for a day at the fair and had no available messenger. I had no milk cans, but "Old Billy and the buggy" were ready, so I put a wash boiler into the front of the buggy, covered it with a long roller towel, clamped the lid down and sat one little girl on each end of it and started in pursuit of milk. At the only house between me and the railroad I found a good hearted Irish woman, who said, "sure, ye can



have every piggin my cow gave this morning, the childer can eat their bread dry today," and she brought out two big crocks of milk and poured it into the wash boiler. We readjusted the towel and the lid, and started over the rough roads for the next possible house with a cow. Here we met with the same cordial reception, but found that the towel had absorbed about half of the first donation, so we took the towel off, and the good woman furnished us with strips of rags to "stop the leaks." When we stopped again there were little puddles on the floor, and the children's shoes were about half full of milk. But we persevered and arrived at the dining hall with about eight gallons of milk, and two saturated little girls, who had to be sent home for dry clothes.

In Mr. Burgess' report to the State Sanitary Board he says:

The dining hall proved to be one of the most important and indispensable of the preparations. No other was more constantly or more liberally patronized. Too much praise cannot be awarded to the ladies who assumed the control and so successfully directed this great feature of the fair. Its attractions and its success were entirely owing to their intelligent and indefatigable exertions.

While all who aided in conducting it are entitled to, and do receive the thanks of the soldiers and the sanitary commission, it is due to the following ladies that special mention should also be made of their names, to-wit: Mrs. Salter, Mrs. Tilton, Mrs. Zimmerman, Mrs. Stoneberger, Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Nutt, Mrs. Gregg, Mrs. Schaum, Mrs. Ives, Mrs. Little, Mrs. Halbert, Mrs. Selby, Mrs. Curtis, Miss Tilton and Miss Cheney of Springfield; and Misses Pickerel of Mechanicsburg; Mrs. Edwards of Watson and Miss Murtfeldt of Rockford.

The great experience of Mr. B. A. Watson of Springfield as a caterer at state fairs, was invaluable to the committee, and to him their thanks are gratefully tendered for the generous and cheerful manner in which he devoted his time and labor to the work of the dining hall during the entire week. To Messrs. Bowen Brothers of Chicago, who furnished crockery free of charge; to Misses Elmwood, Olney and others, of Decatur; to Captain Walker, Mr. Nutt and Mr. Salter of Springfield; to the soldiers from the General Hospital, Camp Butler, and to all who rendered efficient aid to carry through the enterprise successfully, the committee are under great obligations.

The ladies in charge, concluding that the meals should be furnished at the cheapest possible rates, seventy-five cents was fixed on as the price for dinner, and fifty cents each for supper and breakfast tickets. Six thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven meal tickets were sold during the week, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine Agricultural society tickets received, besides the meals furnished to laborers, waiters and carvers, which averaged two hundred and seventy per day, making 10,526 meals supplied during the fair.

Although provisions of all kinds from various parts of the state were profusely donated, yet it was found necessary to purchase large quantities of groceries



Desirable as it would have been to have kept an exact record of all donations to this department, it was found impracticable to do so, and to avoid all danger of making invidious distinctions, it was decided that no lists of donors' names should be published.

A number of beeves, donated to the dining hall, were not received in time to have them butchered. They are credited in the report of receipts.

Articles sold at auction, which were purchased for use in the hall, are also credited in the same statement.

Large quantities of provisions, which it is impossible to report in detail, were received from Macon, Sangamon, DeWitt, Piatt, Menard, Peoria, Adams, Knox, LaSalle, Vermilion, Champaign, Moultrie, Marion and McLean counties.

The following statement of the operations and general management of the dining hall, is made up from copious notes furnished the secretary of the commission by Miss Kate Tilton of Springfield, whose benevolent activity and intelligent superintendence of this most essential feature of the fair, were known to have given to the dining hall its acknowledged popularity, and secured for it the immense patronage it enjoyed.

The dining hall account follows:

#### RECEIPTS.

For meals and sundries, paid Treasurer Burrows.....		\$5,038.45
For beeves donated and sold.....	\$102.25	
For kitchen furniture donated and sold.....	42.00	
For flour donated and sold.....	32.00	
For groceries donated and sold.....	147.89	
For fancy articles—Young Ladies' Booth.....	18.00	
For cash of Dr. Sherman.....	12.00	354.14
Total .....		\$5,392.59

#### EXPENSES.

Paid rent of dining hall.....	\$1,350.00	
Hardware .....	56.75	
Laborers, washing, hauling, etc.....	599.25	
Groceries, ice, butter, bread, meat, oysters.....	1,535.70	
Incidentals .....	78.75	\$3,620.45
Deducting the amount received Young Ladies' booth...	3.00	1,772.14
Proceeds of donation by Mr. Leclare.....	18.00	21.00
Shows the net proceeds of the dining hall.....		\$1,751.14
Add estimated value of vegetables, etc., unsold and sent to Camps Yates, Butler and the Soldiers' Home.....		201.00
Total .....		\$1,952.14

Total value of Contributions from Different Counties Reported, without estimating the value of donations to Dining Hall:

Knox County .....	\$ 5,606.93
McLean .....	4,601.86
Macon .....	3,995.00
Champaign .....	2,091.92
Vermilion .....	1,820.00
Sangamon .....	1,775.25
LaSalle .....	1,429.50
Menard .....	1,160.00

Adams .....	686.00
Clark .....	604.00
Marion .....	500.00
Peoria .....	430.00
Piatt .....	359.00
Christian .....	252.00
Woodford .....	259.00
Bond .....	382.00
Moultrie .....	225.00
Brown .....	205.00
Morgan .....	117.00

Total .....\$26,499.46

Aggregate Statement of Receipts and expenditures:

Total receipts, as per treasurer's report.....	\$26,499.46
Total expenditures as per treasurer's report.....	7,817.54

Net .....	\$18,681.92
Value of sanitary stores forwarded.....	7,879.00
Goods sent to Quincy fair.....	542.00
Cash in hands of Long Creek Association.....	541.00

Total .....\$27,643.92

Articles on hand and their estimated value:

Land, merchandise, unpaid subscriptions, from citizens of McLean County .....	\$ 1,641.00
Muslin in charge of Decatur Aid society.....	112.00
City lot in Decatur, not sold.....	100.00
Durham bull and one beef, unsold.....	120.00
Fancy goods, pictures, etc.....	80.00
Order for grape vines, unsold.....	40.00

Total .....\$29,736.92

On hand, not estimated—Sanitary Building.

Alonzo Burgess, Secretary.

All of the above articles were afterwards sold by Mr. Lowber Burrows, treasurer of the committee, at their full estimated value. The lumber in the sanitary building as reported by the treasurer to have cost \$1,316.06, was sold, as I remember it, for \$1,000, which would make the receipts from the fair \$30,736.92.

The treasurer's report is very long and tedious and I think it not worth while to recapitulate the items as everything was included in the Report of the Executive Committee.

I will make a few extracts from this itemized report which I think either important or curious.

There were cash donations from the Macon County Agricultural Society \$150.00, the Children's Aid Society, Decatur, \$52.75,

including a concert given by the children under the training of Prof. Murphy, (the blind music teacher) and directed by Miss Ada Powers. Sales of the Decatur Aid Society Booth \$366.70. Proceeds of the "Sanitary Ball" \$206.35. Cash donations of citizens of Decatur \$1,675.70. Employees the fifth division I. C. R. R. by D. H. Elwood, Decatur, \$104.00. Cash donations from Hickory, Wheatland, Macon, Blue Mound, Mt. Zion, Illini, Harriestown townships aggregating \$236.75. All these townships had made liberal contributions, beees, chickens, butter, eggs, milk and vegetables to the dining hall for which they received no cash credit.

I find upon a careful review of Treasurer Burrows' report that the \$613 received from the Long Creek booth and which they were allowed to retain to use for the purchase of material to be worked into sanitary stores by the Long Creek Aid Society are not credited in the report of the treasurer of the Fair. This sum was probably more than doubled in value by its careful expenditure, for hospital stores. When the receipts from the Long Creek booth are added to the gross receipts from the Fair it increases the amount to \$31,349.92.

The feather bed donated by Mrs. Henry Prather was made into pillows and sent to the Hospital at Camp Butler.

The lot donated by Wait and Oglesby was sold later for more than \$100.

It took a month after the close of the fair to clear away the debris of materials, finances and correspondence, and when on October 21, the new officers of the Aid Society were elected and so many new members taken in, the "old guard" welcomed an opportunity to rest. The last semi-annual report of the society shows that the spirits of the workers had not flagged nor their work ceased until peace spread her wings over the land. On May 19, the Decatur Hospital Aid Society adjourned, sine die.

Thus ended four years of the most eventful, exciting and resultful period in history. The United States had established her right to be called a Nation. Slavery was no longer a blot on the escutcheon of the land of the free. Woman had discovered herself as an important factor in the body politic and had vindicated

cated her right to own herself and the product of her labor. The church was more Christian and less sectarian, society was more democratic, the arts of peace had been stimulated by the necessities of war, while war itself had been made too dangerous to be entered into on slight pretext by the inventive genius of American artisans. The world was made better and wiser by the bitter struggle.

I am glad to have lived through this history making epoch and to have felt the heart throb of its intense patriotism.

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:  
His truth is marching on."

## SUPPLEMENT

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Hoping to make this book a comprehensive history of the sanitary work of the women of Illinois, the Decatur Daughters of the American Revolution sent a circular letter to a number of chapters in the state asking for reports from their soldiers aid societies, Galesburg, Peoria, and Centralia are the only cities that responded to the invitation. Mrs. Eliza D. Phillips, then of Centralia, who was the chairman of the Egyptian delegation to the Sanitary Fair, sent to me seven letters that she had received from me and one from Mrs. Millikin, during the preliminary preparations for the fair. These letters gave descriptions of the sanitary building, the dining hall and instructions for shipping goods, etc., and have been a great help to me in making my report of that fair.

Mrs. Phillips' very interesting letter might serve as a history of the work of women in almost any town on the State of Illinois. Mrs. Phillips' letter follows:

### WORK OF THE "EGYPTIAN" LADIES.

My daughter, Mrs. Shauck, tells me that you would like to have everything in my possession relating to the "Sanitary Fair" at Decatur in 1864.

Well it is a "far cry" from 1864 to 1912, and in that time much that I had has been destroyed and I have little to send that will be available for your paper.

Letters from you and other Decatur people will indicate what was hoped for, and expected from the Centralia Soldiers Aid Society. Well we worked! *You know* how the women all over the country worked, how we canned and dried fruit, made jelly and preserves, how we sewed at sheets and pillow cases, shirts

and drawers, knit socks, saved rags and picked lint. How we had bazaars and suppers and dinners and concerts, how we sacrificed many (as we felt) an imperative need so that more could go to the front to satisfy the more imperative need of the brave boys on the firing line.

Of course, much of the tragic and comic that must have come to your notice during the fair would make interesting reading. I remember in the Egyptian booth the treasurer and the caterer for that booth got into a squabble over the amount of money required for the day's supplies. The booth was well patronized and even with daily remittances from Centralia it was hard to meet the demands for the day. The treasurer thought she had given out enough money, the caterer insisting there was not nearly enough while the men stood around saying, "I'll bet on the red haired woman." It was rather embarrassing to the rest of us. The caterer, who was the red-haired woman, won her case, as it was right she should, and proceeded triumphantly to town for her supplies.

I think there was much curiosity as to what the Egyptian women looked like. One day a dapper, supercilious looking Boston newspaper man come to the booth and said, "I would like to see some of the Egyptian Ladies." I said, "Well sir, here we are, just look at us." He was somewhat crestfallen and with heightened color made a most profound bow and left.

We were most comfortable during our stay in Decatur. There had been straw spread over a platform and we had taken bed clothes and though they were not "flowery beds of ease," yet after the strenuous work of the day, the resting place and time were very grateful.

The Soldiers Home was established in Centralia August 14, 1863. Though the majority of the people in Egypt were loyal, there were many rebels, copperheads and Knights of the Golden Circle, which only fear kept in check. They burned bridges and tried to burn the roundhouse in Centralia. The engines were rolled out on the railroad tracks and day and night watches guarded them.



The things that happened in our little society seem trivial now, but to us were important then.

We did not always harmonize in our views of things, especially when an election of officers was impending. A president wished to resign, the society was not willing she should, so they quarreled and seemed to enjoy it, a new president was nominated, and then they quarrelled some more. Finally the obstreperous gave in and peace reigned.

We laugh now at the objections urged to some of our plans. We appointed a meeting a certain night to arrange for a Fair, when one good sister said, "we cannot meet then, it will be in the dark of the moon, we had better wait until it is moonlight." Don't that sound funny in the light of today?

Well we had the Fair, and after all expenses were paid we had left in the treasury \$184.25. At our sewing society we worked diligently and talked as little as might be expected. In addition to what we did for the soldiers we helped many refugees from the South whose fathers and brothers were in the army. We bought material, made clothing for them, supplied food. In a letter from Mr. Chase who was general agent at Cairo for the Illinois Sanitary Commission, he asks, "what are you doing for the many refugees passing through here bound for Centralia?"

Well we worked! Some were perhaps unworthy, but we did the best we could.

A doctor of Centralia gave his services without money and without price to the sick soldiers in the home. A number of soldiers died in the home. I send you a sample of the undertakers bill, and in no case did his bill exceed \$12. The grave-diggers' bill was always \$2.50. They certainly did not make expenses. Everybody seemed to esteem it a great privilege to help as they could. We had speeches, lectures by prominent men and debates, "shall women have the right of suffrage."

One man said "Of course give them the right of suffrage, let them suffer if they want to, we have to."

Another burning question was "Is it not wrong for this society composed as it is of Christian women to have an entertainment of tableaux, as they are nothing but theatricals?"

One of the tableaux, I remember was a scene in Scotland. One of the ministers of our town would make a typical Scottish chieftan. Some one asked him to take that part. He said he "would gladly do so, if he could find enough Scotch plaid in the town to make him a kilt." You may imagine the protest. "If he does a thing like that, I will never enter the church again. It is undignified, unbecoming and unchristian."

He came to us with a twinkle in his eyes and said, "You see how it is, I must not disrupt the church and imperil the immortal souls of my people, so must decline."

In arranging for our festivals we had books and many things the stores allowed us to sell on commission.

Surely we did not despise the day of small things.

You ask, were other towns in Egypt interested? They were certainly busy helpers. There was not a town in Southern Illinois but had its Aid Society. Here is a partial list of those that contributed to the support of the home in Centralia.

The Martha Washington League at Bethel.

Soldier's Aid Society of East Grand Cote, Prairie, Ill.

The Women's Royal League of Richview.

The Ladies Loyal League of Nashville, Ill.

Many valuable things from Tennessee Prairie, Ill.

Check for \$50 from Springfield, Ill.

Ladies Loyal League of Colma, Ill.

The Ladies League of Farmington, Ill.

From a Sunday congregation at Elk Horn Prairie, \$26 for the sick and wounded at the home.

Ladies League of Pleasant Ridge.

Fosters, Ill., sent money and produce.

From Mt. Vernon, a box of articles valued at \$75.

From Chester, money and many comforts for the home.

From Ham's Grove, many much needed things.

From Carlyle, money and produce.

From Salem, boxes and barrels of bedding and most cordial offers of assistance for the Sanitary Fair at Decatur.

Ashley contributed money and much that was valuable.

Coulterville, Pricetown, Washington.

In the lapse of time many records were lost. The farmers brought without solicitation loads of wood and coal, also produce from the farm.

The Aid Societies sent dressing gowns, shirts, underclothing, socks, bedside-slippers, books, magazines, eggs, butter, cheese, canned and dried fruit, apples, potatoes, onions, sheets, pillows and cases, towels, and money.

Everything was grist that came to our mill, what could not be used at the Home, we sold and gave the proceeds to the Sanitary Commission. I think there was not one of our party sick at Decatur and I really do not remember any of the Decatur people I met nor the amount of money we gave the commission.

ELIZA D. PHILLIPS.

#### LONG CREEK'S PART IN THE FAIR.

In response to a request from Mrs. Pegram, Mrs. Stickel of Long Creek writes:

Dear friend: I will gladly tell you what I can remember. The Long Creek Society had a booth at the Fair. I was president at the time. Having a family of small children I could not be there much of the time. I secured Mr. George Casner and Mr. Michael Eichinger to take charge of it for me. I remember that Mr. Casner killed a beef to help provide. Mrs. John Davis was a great worker, her son Buel T. Davis now lives in Decatur and probably could give you some information. The society did all they could. We met at Long Creek Church every Thursday afternoon to sew and scrape lint. We had one festival at our house to raise money. After one hundred or more had taken supper, we fixed up boxes of eatables for the soldiers. I think Mrs. Millikin can tell you quite a good deal about this matter. She took an interest in our society.

If this information is of any benefit to you I am truly glad to give it. As I am now in my 89th year, my memory is not so good as it was in days past.

Your friend,

MARY A. STICKEL.  
Casner, III.

## WHAT THE WOMEN OF GALESBURG DID.

While the men were giving their services and pledging faithfulness to the cause of the Union, the women at home were *not* idle and when the first call for troops was made a company of the Seventeenth Regiment was raised in Galesburg and the women of the town offered to make their uniforms. The offer was accepted by the government. One Mother (Mrs. Ewing) took the suit for her boy home and every stitch was sewed by her hands, and when finished a Bible, handkerchiefs and anything that could be was put into the pockets. There may have been other mothers that did the same, but this one is all that I know of.

The uniforms were made satisfactorily and the women worked on during the summer doing the best they could, but in October, 1861, a permanent organization was formed.

A notice was put in the local paper asking *all* women interested in work for the soldiers to meet in the old Academy building on a certain evening (the Academy was situated where the Union Hotel now stands). A large number responded and Mrs. Henry Hurd (Dr. Hurd's wife) was called upon to preside.

From that meeting the Soldiers Aid Society was formed, and from that time until the close of the war women of Galesburg worked for the boys that were fighting for home and the Union of our land.

How can I tell of all that they did. Every town and village in Knox County did everything that was generous and noble to help, but Galesburg seemed to take the lead in loyalty and devotion—no call for help was *ever* refused.

They had sociables, concerts, excursions, sewing bees, picnics, fairs and dinners. At one Fair nearly \$4,000 was raised. Even the small girls were taught to scrape lint, as there was no absorbent cotton in those days, so they felt that they were doing something for the cause.

The membership was 25c *annually* but that did not swell the fund very fast, though many donations helped. Each time they met each one paid ten cents.

Whenever a report of a battle would come and the call for

supplies, our women never failed to respond with food and clothing. The perishable food could only be sent to the nearby hospitals, but canned and dried fruits and vegetables, blackberry cordial that helped to save many a man's life, was sent from Galesburg.

I well remember how the ladies would come to my mother's home to can fruit, make pickles and blackberry cordial. No glass bottles with tight-fitting tops were in use then, so you can imagine the labor of sealing the tin cans. There was no gas stoves either, but great boilers of fruit on the stoves and such hot weather as it was. Not only one summer, but four that this was done so willingly.

The shirts and drawers that were made, so many of them, also coats and pants, stockings knit! Everything that could be made for the comfort of the men was done by our loyal women.

Our townswoman, Mrs. Bickerdyke, went south to nurse the boys and many a man living today can testify to her loving care. She found her place when she went to Cairo in August, 1861, to find out what was needed—then she came home to settle her family affairs for a prolonged stay. At Donelson and Pittsburg Landing she was untiring in her efforts to relieve the suffering of the wounded. At the battle of Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain she was in the field 30 days, and for most of that time the only woman nurse.

At Vicksburg she undertook to correct the abuses of the sanitary supplies and was *not* at all times welcome by the officers in charge. One of the officers complained and asked to have her removed. When told her name the commanding officer (Grant) said:

"You must apply to Mr. Lincoln as she ranks me."

On the statue to her memory I believe that this remark was accredited to Gen. Sherman, though the history of Knox County says that Gen. Grant was in command.

Another of Mother Bickerdyke's good deeds was her reorganization of Memphis hospital. She transformed the filthy Gayoso (Hotel) into a neat and comfortable place. She found it hard to get butter and eggs for the men so she hurried home,

knowing that in Knox County there were generous farmers that would *give* and women to help her. She came into the Soldiers Aid meeting one dismal day and took the secretary (Miss Mary Allen West) by storm, marched her out of the room saying she needed her. Away they went up to Ontario, where they were successful in getting 200 cows and 1000 chickens (this seems to be a large number but again I quote from History of Knox County) that she took back to Memphis. Such a lowing and cackling was never heard before in that city.

Some of the ladies complaining to the commanding general of Mother Bickerdyke and her noisy flocks, Gen. Grant finally assigned her to President's island, Island 49, where her chickens cackled to their heart's content and where they continued to lay eggs, her cows grew fat and supplied milk in abundance. Here they remained until the close of the war, then were given to the poor contrabands who had been loyal. This was *one* woman that made herself, as well as her home town, famous and her good works live after her.

Of the many that stayed at home and gave of their time, money and strength, shall I recall some of the names? Mrs. Josiah Babcock, Mrs. Sherman, Mrs. Henry Hurd, Mrs. F. M. Smith (whose husband was captain of a company in the Seventeenth Infantry, afterwards Colonel), Mrs. Olmsted, Mrs. Elkins, Mrs. Judge Lawrence, Mrs. Knowles, Mrs. Chappell (Mr. Robert Chappell's mother), Mrs. Edgar Stone, Mrs. Ewing, Mrs. Carpenter, Mad. Cook, Mrs Stewart and many others. *Nearly* every woman in town was interested.

You notice I say *nearly* every woman, as there were a few that did not take much interest. One woman and her husband were heard to remark that they were glad when they heard that President Lincoln was murdered. Her neighbor offered to give her featherbed if some one would use it to tar and feather the couple.

We can hardly realize today that a ride on the steam cars was a novelty in 1861, but such was the case and under the auspices of the Soldiers Aid, the Burlington gave rates and the ladies made money in that way.



They had lectures. Mrs. Mary A. Livermore of Chicago Sanitary Commission gave her first lecture here. She told my mother that when she was riding from the station and saw her name in large letters that she was the speaker of the evening, she was so frightened she wanted to go straight back to Chicago.

It was soon after the battle of Vicksburg. "She spoke for one hour and a half and for thrilling pathos her address has never been equaled here," so says the secretary, Miss West, in her report for 1864.

Miss West was a very remarkable woman, taking the lead in all advanced ideas as well as in the work for Soldiers aid. She was the first woman county superintendent of schools in Knox County. In temperance work she was one of the first to wear the white ribbon, was sent around the world as missionary and wherever she went was given much prominence, especially in Japan. There she was taken very ill and died. Her death was due to Brights disease, brought on by over work and travel.

The society gave out for soldiers and their families from 1862 until August, 1865, \$13,586.15, and I feel that I must also add that during the same time Galsburg sent to the Christian and Sanitary Commission in Chicago, \$6,614.75 (our aid was auxillary to Chicago Commission), to the Soldiers and Freedmen's Bureau, \$2,199.10; in aid to families, \$39,950; making a total of \$62,340.16.

When we consider that at that time Galesburg was a town of about six thousand people it would seem that we have reason to be proud of our small burg.

Circulars were sent out and canvasses made. Mr. Geo. Davis (for whom the new Science Hall is named) said that when my mother, Mrs. M. J. Chase, went with him to ask aid of the farmers that cows, chickens, and even horses were given for the asking. It was the same with many others, the principles of brotherhood were so grandly shown. That spirit has survived through all these years. That same thought brought all people regardless of creed to the broader and larger feeling of life.

The history of Knox County tells of two ladies from Galesburg and one from Knoxville going to the Sanitary Fair at De-

catur and having charge of the contributions. There were several ladies from Galesburg, and my mother was one. The articles given were expected to be fancy things made up by women, but many substantial articles were sent. Mr. Geo. W. Brown gave a corn planter and one was given by his employees. A sugar mill was sent from the Frost foundry. The ladies had such success in selling these that Mr. Deere of Moline told them he would donate his fine plow on exhibition at the Fair if they could sell it. They did so and many other manufacturers followed his example. Mr. Geo. W. Brown concluded to give them the very fine corn planter that he had had made to exhibit at the Fair, making the third planter that he had given.

This Fair was exceeded by the Galesburg Sanitary Fair held July 3, 4 and 5, 1864. At this time the country was straining every nerve to help and there was much need of all kinds of food for the soldiers, potatoes and onions were so very expensive. The usual ways of making money was not sufficient so the grand fair was held in the old Academy and \$4,000 was made.

I can remember the day that the 100 day boys marched away. It was at the old Academy that we had our singing class, Mrs. M. D. Cooke was our teacher (I must have been eight years old). Some one said, "Forrest Cooke goes to the war today." The fife and drums were playing while we children talked it over.

It was this year I believe that Mrs. Cooke gave her entertainment, "Flora's Queen," that added \$404 to the Sanitary Commission fund. Prof. Furhman was pianist.

Shall I tell of the work that the girls in public schools, of Knox and Lombard Colleges, of the ladies on Mulberry street that sewed *every* week besides going to the *regular* Soldiers Aid meetings, of the dinners served when some speaker of note came, of the parades with flags flying and bands playing, and always the fife and drum? The very *sound* made the tears start, but how it aroused the young men to loyalty and service. Shall I speak of the Knox and Lombard boys that enlisted, urged by their girl admirers, of the talks that stirred the hearts of young and old, no thoughts of the many loved ones that would never return but of service for their country? Flags were sent that caused much

pleasure to the men, but they really enjoyed more the tobacco and pipes that had been put in with the flag. The parade usually found its way to Gale's grove on Cherry street, where there would be more music, then dinner, and after that the speeches that thrilled the hearts of old and young.

To the children it was only a jolly time, but to fathers and mothers it stirred their hearts and gave them courage to go on with their labors for the men who were fighting for home and country. All pastors helped the aid in every way and Beecher Church (chapel) was the meeting place during the hot weather, Dunns Hall also. Miss Ferguson's millinery girls raised nearly one hundred dollars in 1864.

In the report for 1864 Mrs. Henry Hurd was president for six months, Mrs. M. J. Chase the remaining six months; Miss Mary Allen West was corresponding secretary all the year, Mrs. Warren Willard, Mrs. Sage, Mrs. John A. Marshall, Mrs. Sherman and Miss Kingsbury holding office with them.

During the last year of the war there was much need of help among the soldier's widows and orphans. They were not neglected so the Dorcas society was formed and looked after their needs. Mrs. J. V. N. Standish was the first President of that society. Many times the way seemed rough but the brave women kept on, helping in every way possible until peace was declared.

ELLA CHASE KNOWLES,

For the D. A. R. of Rebecca Park Chapter,  
Galesburg, Ill.

## THE WOMAN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE OF PEORIA.

On June 3, 1863, in Rouse's Hall, at a meeting presided over by the Hon. H. H. Leavitt of the Supreme Court of Ohio and a delegate to the Presbyterian General Assembly in session in that city, the women of Peoria organized themselves into a society bearing the name of the Woman's National League and pledged themselves to encourage and sustain the brave soldiers by deeds of kindness and words of cheer, to honor those who were fighting

in defense of the "dear old flag" until the day of its sure and certain triumph.

Mrs. A. G. Curtenius was elected president, Mrs. P. R. K. Brotherson and Mrs. Isaac Underhill vice presidents, Mrs. L. R. Webb secretary, and Mrs. W. A. Herron treasurer. Mrs. Curtenius was president as long as the League existed, Mrs. William Weis was vice president, Mrs. L. R. Webb and Mrs. Julia P. Bourland secretary, and Miss Lizzie Calligan treasurer, after the first year. Mrs. Lucie B. Tyng succeeded Mrs. Bourland in 1865.

The labors of this Society in behalf of our soldiers were manifold and different organizations attended to specific interests under the one general head. The "Soldiers' Aid Society" confined its operations chiefly to the soldiers in the field; the "Soldiers' Relief Society" attended mainly to the relief of suffering in the families of those who had gone to risk life in defense of their common country; while a "Soldiers' Rest" was established and maintained by the League where soldiers could find a temporary home in their goings to and from the field of battle. Receptions were held, all manner of stores provided in connection with the Christian and Sanitary Commissions, and the comfort of the soldiers looked after in all possible ways.

In September, 1864, the Woman's National League sent four young ladies, Alice M. Dodge, Sarah D. Hurd, Mary Hansel, and Flora Day, with Mrs. Isaac Underhill as chaperon, to Decatur to take charge of a booth at the Sanitary Commission Fair held in that city.

On their arrival at the station in Decatur it was raining and only one carriage was there and in that but one occupant—a gentleman. As there were five ladies, it looked hopeless for them. Miss Hurd, a bright, vivacious blonde, turning to her companions thoughtlessly remarked and never dreaming she might be heard:

"That gentleman might get out and let us have the carriage; he could ride with the driver."

No more than said, the gentleman jumped out, saying, "Certainly, Miss."

On their way to their destination the carriage stopped before

a beautiful home and the gentleman alighted. Stepping to the side, he said, "Ladies, my carriage is at your service to take you wherever you wish to go."

Imagine their consternation at finding it was a private carriage!

The next morning at the Fair Grounds the young ladies, dressed in white with blue silk caps ornamented with gilt stars and gold cords and tassels and wearing long silk scarfs of red, white, and blue over their shoulders with the word Peoria in gilt letters on them, were approached by a gentleman who inquired if that was the Peoria booth. The young ladies quickly stepped forward and he said, "I should like to have the pleasure of taking by the hand the young lady that is not afraid to speak her mind and invite General Oglesby to give up his carriage."

Then they learned that they were being addressed by none other than the Honorable Richard Yates, Governor of Illinois.

The incident although greatly regretted brought them much attention and unusual sales. After several days spent at Decatur, the committee returned to Peoria with \$235 to give to the Woman's National League for the relief of the soldiers as the following report shows:

The committee from the woman's National League to the Sanitary Fair at Decatur thankfully acknowledges the following donations:

Mr. E. Erler, silver spoon holder; Mr. Morse, set silver forks; Mr. Richmond, silver napkin ring; Mr. Strickler, one large book; Mr. Geo. Bacon, photographic album, prayer-book and pencil; Messrs. Simoneau & Colburn, three boxes perfumery; Mr. P. S. Shelly, hair tonic and perfumery; Wm. Davis, two toilet bottles and piano brush; Dr. Miles, one basket and one box champagne; Dr. Headly, two bottles perfumery; Messrs. Thurlow & Bunn, \$4; Mr Weiss, Japanese basket; Mr. R. D. McClure, Britannia set; Mr. Hill, printing; Mrs. Prescott, artificial flowers; J. W. Johnson, \$5; H. E. Howe, \$2; Isaac Underhill, \$1; Mr. Bishop, \$1; Messrs. Noyes, Day & Co., Johnston & Coskery, P. C. Bartlett, H. Wilber, A. Frank and Clark various articles. Kickapoo Aid Society, one quilt valued at \$25; Miss Fisher of Havana, one pair of baby socks; Miss Nellie Maxwell, one large pincushion and doll; Mrs. Wm. Reynolds, infant's basket; Mrs. McClallen, three pair knit mittens; Jacksonville ladies, child's merino suit, six transparencies, three tidies, several yards tatting, six bottles currant wine, toilet set and one pair of slippers.

From members of the League, one sofa pillow, one mouchoir sachet, two tatting collars, four toilet cushions, two pair mats, two baby skirts, six baby sacques, three breakfast shawls, two opera hoods, two needle books, two work boxes, one watch case, two sets of combs, three crocheted collars, three pair crocheted mittens, one large doll and chair, one portfolio, two knit baskets, two hanging baskets, one crying doll and

bedstead, two tidies, eight knit wash cloths, six book marks, two pair baby shoes, two lace handkerchiefs, two honiton lace collars, twelve books, two foot stool covers, one walking doll, one penwiper, twelve dollars, etc. Also Messrs John Durham, Fullerton, Wm. Durst and John Kuhn for their assistance. Net proceeds of sales of the Peoria Booth \$325.

ALICE M. DODGE,  
Chairman of Committee.



## APPENDIX



I am indebted to the Decatur Review of January 22, 1905, for the following list of all grown up people who lived in Decatur in 1839. This list was made from memory by Mr. David Hummell of Lincoln, who was a former resident of Decatur, and is verified by a number of old residents.

Men with families:	3, Wm. Webb	5, Landy Harrell
Number grown persons	4, Mr. Cowan	4, Ross Elliott
6, Benjamin Austin	2, J. Y. Braden	2, J. J. Peddecord
2, Dr. James Read	2, George Galbraith	2, Col. E. D. Carter
3, Mr. Shultz	4, Wm. Kibby	2, Mark Turner
2, Henry Prather	2, Kirby Benedict	3, Henry Hummell
2, Hosea Armstrong	2, David Rawles	2, Samuel McKinley
2, Wm. Cantrell	2, James Pierce	4, James Nesbit & Mother
2, N. Ashby	3, Hartwell Robinson	2, R. Wren
5, Dr. J. G. Spear	2, Thos. Johnson	2, Rev. Wm. Crissey
2, George Querrey	2, Rolla White	2, Philo Hill
2, Samuel Nesbit	2, Alex Mahood	4, Leonard Ashton
2, Preston Butler	2, Alfred Barnwell	2, Wm. Williams
2, Dr. Wm. S. Crissey	2, Robert Johnson	2, James T. Montgomery
3, Mrs. Duly & daughters	2, Joe Stevens	2, Minion Peddecord
2, Mr. Maddox	2, Capt. D. L. Allen	2, Dayton Dunham

The single men and the women they afterward married:

Samuel Allen	Dr. Joseph King, Marietta Packard
Benj. Dillehunt, Miss Nesbit	Chas. Pringle, Miss Harrell
J. J. Peddecord, Miss Adamson	Wm. Bosworth, Minerva Daley
J. D. Tait, Susan Spangler	Benj. Oglesby
M. Elson, Miss Sawyer	Willis Oglesby, Miss Glore
E. McClellan, Judith Snyder	Mat Bradshaw
Wm. Stamper, Ann M. Snyder	Samuel Dewees
John Post, Miss Kaufman	Frank Emerson
Seth Post, Miss Bunn	William Dewees
Robert Allen, Miss Maddox	Amos Badkin
James Draper	Silas Packard, Mary Sawyer
Wm. Magles	Don Robinson, Miss Daley
Wm. Condell, Elizabeth Packard	Dayton Dunham, Marilla Robinson
Wash. Nesbitt, Miss Prince	Chas. Emerson, Miss Harrell
Dr. Ira Curtis, Jane Butler	Carl Bosworth
Champ Butler	E. O. Smith, Harriet Krone
James Ashton	Joseph Dewees
Peter Palmer	Helding Adamson
Anson Packard, Miss Norris	Enoch Gibbs, Miss Ashton
Edward Packard, Miss Spear	Benj. Sawyer
Mason Packard	Watt Culver

Jerome Gorin married Miss Eleanor Fawcett, whose step father was the Rev. Jesse Walker, known among the Indians as Father Walker. It was in his house in the village of Chicago that on Sept. 26, 1833, the lands of the Pottawatamies, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians were finally ceded to the United States. This treaty included the site of Chicago, and all northern Illinois.

The Snyder family, who are not included in Mr. Hummell's enumeration, probably lived outside of the village. Aunt Judy Oglesby, to whom half the people in Decatur in 1849 seemed to be related, was a member of that family. It was Aunt Judy who received and cared for the orphan children of her husband's brother, when they were first brought to Decatur. In their childhood, Mrs. Henry Prather and Mrs. J. J. Peddecord shared her motherly care with their brother Dick. Governor Oglesby, Mrs. Wm. Stamper and Mrs. Ed. McClellan were also her nieces and members of her family.

Dr. John G. Spear, whose wife was a niece of Aunt Judy, built the tavern on the court house square, which was operated by Landy Harrell. Dr. Spear also owned a drug store on the southeast corner of East Main Street, which has been a drug store corner for more than seventy years. Dr. Spear, who was born on February 12, 1809, lived to celebrate his one hundredth birthday and was visited on that day in his old Kentucky home by many distinguished people, who were enroute to the centennial celebration of Lincoln's birthday.

Mrs. Edward Packard, afterwards the wife of Col. J. P. Boyd, was an adopted daughter of Dr. Spear.

The Powers family are not included in the above enumeration. William Powers, who was a bachelor, had entered large tracts of land in the vicinity of Decatur and his brothers George, Samuel, Orlando, and Chauncey, all lived in or near Decatur. His sisters, Mrs. Lamira Wilkinson and Mrs. Sarah Ewing, were both living on the "Powers farm" at that time.

The Florey family, of which Mrs. Charles Tuttle was a member, lived just east; and Isaac Pugh and family were located just north of town.

Between the years 1839 and 1849 there were very few changes in the population of Decatur. David Krone had become the pop-

ular landlord of the Macon House. Of his six daughters, two had married Decatur bachelors. Harriet was Mrs. E. O. Smith and Lydia was Mrs. Shepherd. Mrs. George Bright and Mrs. D. S. Shellabarger were the Misses Maggie and Annie Krone, when Mr. Lincoln used to be a patron of their father's hostlery. Lowell Krone, the only son of the family is now, and has been for more than fifty years a druggist in Decatur.

Dr. Rice, whose wife was a sister of Jerome R. Gorin and of Mrs. Isaac Pugh, was a successful physician in 1849. Mrs. Giles, the mother of Mrs. A. A. and Mrs. Caroline Powers, came to Decatur in 1847 with her son James, and her daughters Maria and Ellen. H. B. Durfee and Thomas O. Smith were also recent comers. With these exceptions the roster of names given by Mr. Hummell, would serve as a census of the town in 1849.

Mr. Hummell does not undertake to give the number of children then in Decatur, but he says there were more children to each married family than you will find these days.

In the list forty-two families are mentioned. Perhaps it would be reasonable to say there was an average of four children to the family. This just about doubles the grown people given in the list and furnishes us a population for Decatur at that time of 340.

Almost every trade necessary to the comfort of the people found a representative in Decatur in 1839. There were lawyers and doctors, preachers and school teachers, office holders and merchants. There was a shoe shop and a tailor shop, two wagon makers, two cabinet makers, who made pretty tables and chairs and bureaus, there was a livery stable and two taverns. The mail was carried on horseback from Terre Haute to Springfield twice a week. Silas Packard once had the contract for carrying that mail. Before 1849 two stage coach lines had been established. One from Crawfordsville, Indiana, was a three seated covered wagon on springs, and three people were expected to use one seat, the other, the Terre Haute line, was more pretentious and had a big red coach body swung on leather springs, with a "boot" behind for baggage; these coaches came through Decatur twice a week but seldom carried more than two or three passengers and were not money making institutions.

Town lots had very little value. James T. Montgomery bought the lot on the corner of East Main and Water Streets, 80 feet on Water Street and seventy-six on East Main, for thirty-five dollars. He also bought a lot on South Main for a hat and thought he had made a poor bargain because "there was no taxes to pay on the hat."

In 1849 Mr. Montgomery bought the forty acres just north of the Wabash railroad bounded by Water and Broadway on the east and west, for six dollars an acre. Forty acres on which the depots now stand was offered to Mr. W. Martin in 1851 for six dollars an acre. Martin, Prather & Gatling bought that same forty, three years later for \$100 an acre and donated ten acres to the Illinois Central Railroad Company.

There were some remarkable climatic phenomena in the early days of Decatur. The "deep snow," from which all early settlers calculated dates, occurred in the winter of 1831 and 1832. The snow fall commenced early in November and continued at short intervals until the first of April. Between storms the top of the snow would freeze hard and the next strata fall and freeze. The cold was intense and there were weeks when the sun was not once visible. People were blockaded in their homes till threatened starvation compelled them to cut passageways to the corn fields. Many families lived for weeks on boiled corn. One of the greatest difficulties encountered was "getting in wood" enough to cook the corn. The houses were so banked with snow that those inside did not suffer greatly from the cold. There is no record of death from cold or starvation, but untold hardships were endured by the people. For years after the "deep snow" game was very scarce in Illinois.

Another meteorological event which can never be forgotten, was the "sudden freeze" which occurred in January, 1836. It had rained all day a cold, misty, rain and the mud in the road paths was a deep slush. About four o'clock in the afternoon a strong cold wind from the north-west changed the temperature in less than fifteen minutes from 34 degrees to 20 degrees, an almost instantaneous change of fourteen degrees. The misty rain changed in a moment to sharp particles of ice, that in the

fierce wind cut like needles. Cattle and geese were frozen into the ponds and had to be cut out of the ice. General I. C. Pugh had left the court house on horseback in the rain. When he reached the big pond on Water street, just a half mile away, the water was covered with long needles of ice and in a few moments was frozen entirely over and before he reached home, just north of Pugh street, the ground was frozen solid enough to bear up his horse. The stories of this instantaneous freeze seem almost mythical, but they are all corroborated by many witnesses.

#### REV. N. M. BAKER TELLS OF EARLY DAYS.

In response to my request, Mr. N. M. Baker, chaplain of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, prepared the following paper, to be included in the appendix:

I was born and grew to manhood about five miles east of Decatur, and so have seen both the country and the town grow from very crude beginnings to that which they now are. My parents saw the Commissioners looking over the country in search of a location for the future county seat, and they were very glad when the site was finally chosen on the west side of the river, for they had not, at that time, been able to enter their land from the Government; and they feared that if the town should be established on the east side of the river the land near by would be quickly taken up by others, and so they would lose their cabin.

The country surrounding Decatur retained many of the features of a wilderness even so late as 1848. Wild turkeys came into the grain fields after harvest, feeding on the grain and grasshoppers that were to be found among the stubble, and in the winter they often picked corn from the cracks of the corn pens and with their strong feet tore away the roof of clapboards that covered them.

There were deer in the woods and the prairies, and sometimes they came so near to the houses that they could be seen from the open door. Wolves lurked in the thickets and tall grass, and often showed themselves openly.



In the cold, clear, frosty mornings of winter, hundreds of prairie chickens would come in from the prairie and light on the trees at the edge of the timber, and cackle and chatter for hours. In the spring and in the fall geese, brant, and ducks of many kinds and in fabulous numbers swept through the air, fed in the fields, or floated in the waters of the river and the ponds; and the clear call of the sand-hill crane was a familiar note, as he danced on the prairie, or, high overhead, winged his way to the farther north in the spring, or in the fall to the everglades in Florida. And flock after flock of wild pigeons in their semi-annual flights were so dense as to cast a shadow like a passing cloud.

An occasional eagle circled and screamed in the upper air, and I remember once to have seen one make its headlong earthward swoop, and to have heard the whistling of its wings and the startled outcry of a flock of wild turkeys, some member of which was its intended prey.

We still saw the large pinnated wood-pecker as he beat his tattoo on the dead limbs or cackled in his jerkey flight from tree to tree. And we looked with big eyes at the Carolina paroquets, clad in their brave attire of green and gold, as all the parrots are, feeding on the wild cherries, chattering and laughing to themselves with the true parrot's voice, and often hanging back downward as all the parrots do. It may hardly be believed that any of the parrot family ever lived wild in the woods of Macon County, but I can still prove the fact by at least two living witnesses besides myself. These semi-tropical birds were the first to disappear.\* The wolves and wild turkeys and deer are gone; the water-fowl are seldom seen flying over; the prairie chickens are few and far between; the voice of the crane is no longer heard. If an eagle spreads his wings in our smoky air he is a wanderer, tempest driven; and the passenger pigeon, once most numerous of all, has not only disappeared from Macon County, but from the whole earth. Ah well, there must be some loss as well as gain when a wilderness is transformed into cities and fields and gardens.

One of my first distinct memories of things pertaining to the outside world is of hearing the political orators shouting "Fifty-

\*Mrs. Wm. F. Martin says she well remembers the flocks of parrots that fed from her father's cherry trees when she was a child.



four forty or fight!" which of course must have been before the settlement of the Oregon question. We were ardent party men in the presidential campaign of that time, every boy of us. If our fathers were Whigs we raised ash poles for Henry Clay, and if Democrats we raised hickory poles for Polk, and made red stripes on our flags with the juice of poke-berries.

On Saturday morning my father rode into town on horseback and I rode on the same horse behind him; there were what seemed to me great crowds of people. The first battles of the Mexican war had been fought, and the news had just reached Decatur. There was much excitement and the noise of incessant talking so got on my unaccustomed nerves that I seemed to be still hearing it for days afterward.

I have some memory of the starting of volunteers from this county to that far-off seat of war, and a much clearer memory of their return. For then a great barbecue was held in their honor. It must have been somewhere between where the Central railroad now is, and Johns' hill, then known as Foran's hill. Long tables were prepared of rough planks, at which everybody ate standing. A pit was dug in the ground in which a fire was kindled, and an ox roasted over it; and I think old Black Ben, who must have been the first colored resident of Macon County, superintended the roasting. I remember that the piece of this ox that fell to my lot was, according to my judgment, rather rare.

Colonel E. D. Baker made an address on this occasion, the only time I remember to have seen him; but I can't remember a word he said. I was more interested in the long tables, and the pit in the ground where the ox had been roasted. The real manner of the roasting I had been too late on the ground to see. I wonder how many people are yet living in Decatur and Macon County who were at that barbecue?

I have spoken of Black Ben. He was rather a conspicuous figure in the early day, because for several years he was the only colored person the children born in this county had ever seen. He lived by himself in a log cabin near the road which leads out from East William street to the Spangler bridge, between where

the Brush College cemetery now is and the top of the bluff west of the river.

That Ben was an honest man I have this evidence. In that day there were no fenced pastures; all the stock ran out and so got mixed together. It was needful, then, that every man should have a mark by which he could identify his own property. My father's mark was a crop and a split in each ear; that is, the point of the ear of pig or lamb or calf would be cut off straight across and the part left would be split back for an inch toward the head. A neighbor's mark was an upper slope on each ear.

Now the possible combination of cuts and splits and slopes and under bits and upper bits and smooth round holes, in one ear or in both, is well nigh endless, so that every man could have a mark of his own without trespassing on that of another. One of these marks, when recorded in the clerk's office, became a sort of copyright or trade-mark, and no one else could lawfully use it.

Through ignorance, Ben adopted father's trade mark. Here was a good foundation for controversy and trouble, and I suppose father could have complained and made Ben stop using his mark; but what was the use? Ben never claimed stock that was not his own, and when father's hogs crossed the river and ranged in his neighborhood, which they often did, he always gave notice of the fact and pointed out where they had made their beds.

It seems a little odd that this man should have been in this thinly settled country for so many years, the only one of his race. I don't think he was a fugitive from justice, and though once, no doubt, a slave, he was not in the usual sense a runaway. This is the story which I have heard. His master wanted to look over the new country with a view to future investments, and for his own comfort he brought Ben along as a body servant, trusting that he would stay with him either through personal attachment or through ignorance of his rights.

But some one whispered in Ben's ear that, as he had been brought into a free state by his master's own act, he did not have to go back into slavery unless he wanted to do it; and this black man chose loneliness and liberty, rather than slavery and association with his own race. And who can blame him? He made

an honest living for himself while able to work, but laid nothing by, and so ended his days as a county charge.

I remember the old Methodist Church and the clapboards with which two sides of it were enclosed. Indeed, I remember these clapboards so distinctly that I fail to remember the planking on the other two sides. And, by the way, there was once a debate in that house lasting two or three days, between two ministers, a Methodist and a Universalist, involving those questions on which these two denominations would be sure to differ. There were moderators to see that each debater obeyed the rules agreed on, and had his rightful time and no more, and it seems to me that Dick Oglesby was one of these moderators, and that Seth Post had something to do with it too. As an indication of the interest which the people of that day took in such questions, I remember that my father and mother and all we children were faithful attendants during the whole time, driving in a two horse wagon from our home, five miles to town and back again daily, fording the river each time, for there was no bridge.

There was neither base-ball nor foot-ball in those days, but it was the fashion to come to town on Saturdays just the same. There were many contests among these young men and boys, foot races, wrestling matches, jumping, and going "half-hammon," which was a hop, step, and jump. Another pastime in which the older men also engaged was trying who could throw a four-pound weight the farthest. These weights were thrown from somewhere between Main Street and Water Street, and the course was along East Main Street as far as possible. As nobody was ever hurt or inconvenienced by this pastime, it is evident that the streets were not full of comers and goers as they are today.

Among the early industries of Decatur, has everybody forgotten the old carding-machine that used to stand near the branch not far from where the gas works now are? That was where we brought our wool, nicely washed and picked, with so many pounds grease to so many pounds of wool—I have forgotten the proportion; and we took home great bunches of long, greasy rolls that were spun into thread on the big wheel for our winter clothing.

The motive power of this machine was a yoke of oxen that slowly climbed an inclined wheel and never got to the top of the incline, as it constantly turned them. This was a nice, greasy, smelly place for the boys to play in, and that slowly revolving wheel was no end of a wonder.

I see that you tell about the spinning and weaving of woolen cloth, and even of the carding by hand before this machine was set up; and I have seen my mother do all of these things. But is it to be supposed that we wore heavy wollen clothing all summer? Not at all. We sowed flax, pulled it up by the roots when it was ripe, bound it in bundles, beat the seed out with a stick when it was dry, spread the stalks out on the meadow till they became brittle in the rain and the sunshine, raked them up and bound them into bundles again. We broke these stems up fine in a home-made "break," each bundle to itself, then "skutched" them with wooden knives to knock out the bits of broken stems, hackled them to take out the tow, and then the long soft lint that remained was spun on a little wheel and woven on the home-made loom, and we were clothed for the summer, if not exactly in "purple and fine linen," at least in linen that was fine enough to do.

For a good many years there was little difference between Decatur and the country. Through the country there was a log school house here and there, and Decatur had just one school house, which was not much better. There was but little history or grammar in these schools, and not much mathematics beyond the rule of three; but they were all strong on spelling, and there was much rivalry as to which school could produce the best speller.

There was a little log school house not far from where North Fork Church now stands, and there were several excellent spellers in the school held there, some that could spell every word in Webster's blue-backed spelling book, and were very hard to "down" with the dictionary. The Decatur school also was proud of its spellers, and challenged this country school to come in and prove by actual test which was the "better man."

Of course they came, in two horse wagons, Roben, their teacher, with them. Triplet, the Decatur teacher, marshaled his

forces, and in the midst of much excitement the match was on. Two cousins of mine, Clementine Davis and William Davis, were the acknowledged champions of the country school, and it was arranged that William should defend the honor of the school against all comers, Clementine, who was thought to be the better speller of the two, being held in reserve in case her brother should by any possibility miss. A few of the smaller scholars on both sides were permitted to spell first, but this was mere by-play.

When ready for real business, William took the floor. And he proved to be in "fine fettle" that evening, for one after another of Decatur's champions went down before him till there was not one left. And so the country school went home triumphant, singing that well known song which begins "Oh were you ne'er a school boy," and contains somewhere amidst its numerous stanzas these exquisitely appropriate words, "We routed them, we scouted them, nor lost a single man." I wonder if the honorable school board of Decatur has any knowledge of this bit of history connected with what I suppose must have been their very first school house.

Speaking of Triplet reminds me that possibly he was Decatur's first bookseller. I know that the very first book I ever bought I got from him. He had his stock in trade spread out on a table in one of the rooms on the first floor of the old brick court house. I walked in and laid my whole capital, a silver five cent piece, on the table, and told him I wanted a book. As I had no idea what particular book I did want, he gave me a "Rough and Ready" Almanac, containing, in addition to the usual matter of an almanac, a brief historical sketch of Zachary Taylor's campaign in Mexico. Probably it was the only book he could afford to sell for five cents. It was hardly an appropriate one for a small boy to be sure, but I read every word of it, and, whether or not it was responsible, I have loved history ever since.

Both the Wabash and Illinois Central Railroads were finished through Macon County in the spring of 1854.\* My brother, Rev. W. P. Baker of Hillsboro, was at that time a resident of Decatur, and bore arms in the interest of law and order on occa-

\*Smith, History of Macon County, pp. 206-7.



sion of the Dutch and Irish "war" which you chronicle. I will let his statement supplement what you now have on that subject.

You ask me to write as fully as I can remember the circumstances attending the 'scrimmage' between the Irish and the Dutch, while working on the railroads then entering Decatur.

It must have been in the summer of 1853. The I. C. R. R. Company was employing a number of Dutch on its road in the vicinity of the Sangamon river south of town. The Great Western, as it was then called, now the Wabash, had a large force of Irish at work near Stephen's creek west of town. What caused the disagreement I do not know. It was probably an exhibition of race hatred, influenced perhaps by business competition, for each road was trying to get through first so the other would have to put in the crossings. At any rate the Irish were vowing vengeance on the Dutch.

After the day's work was done,—between sundown and dark, they came marching two abreast down Main street from the west, I feel like saying two hundred strong, but that would probably be an exaggeration, each one armed with a heavy club. The Dutch, however, had received word of their coming, and knowing that they were greatly outnumbered, abandoned their shanties and came into town seeking protection. They were put in the old Court House, and a company that had been organized for military drill sometime before this, was mustered in front to protect them.

We numbered, I think, about forty strong, and as I remember it, W. J. Usrey was in command as captain. We were armed with some old smoothbore Springfield muskets that belonged to the state. A few had procured powder and shot from the stores, but the most of us were without ammunition; but we had bayonets and therefore looked fierce. Besides the members of the company, a number of the citizens had armed themselves with whatever came handy and were also in line. I remember distinctly seeing James Shoaf, the editor of the Decatur Gazette, in the line with a piece of wooden eave-trough on his shoulder; and as he turned suddenly in obedience to some command the back of his trough hit Willis Johnson on the head and knocked his hat off.

The Irish, having demolished the enemy's shanties, came marching back, but seeing such a formidable display of military strength, they made no halt, but marched straight on to their own camp, and the war was over. These recollections of nearly sixty years ago may be inaccurate in many respects, but the main feature of the story I am sure is correct.

Mr. Montgomery's description of the old brick court house is very accurate, and it calls up many memories. My father was a member of the first grand jury ever impaneled in Macon County, and for many years was often required to serve on one jury or the other; and as I came in with him to take the horse back home, I became rather familiar with the court room and with the personal appearance of actors in it.

There was Judge Treat, a tall slender man as I remember him, and after him Judge David Davis, a big man then but not quite



so big as he afterward became, when a special chair had to be made for him before he could take his seat in the Senate of the United States. And there was Benedict; and Linder; and Lincoln, (at that time as innocent of fame as any of the rest of them;) and Thornton; and Ficklin; and Eden; and of course Emerson and Oglesby and Post and others.

I have mentioned O. B. Ficklin, but really I remember him much more distinctly at my father's house in the country than in the court room. He was a candidate for some office, for the Legislature or for Congress, I forgot which, and he was making a thorough canvass of the county, going from house to house, making himself agreeable and incidentally of course soliciting votes. The houses were scattered along the edges of the timber, and often far apart; what a "Weary Willie" he must have been by the time he got over all his district in that way! But I remember him particularly because he was the first man I ever saw wearing black kid gloves. That a politician should go among the pioneers asking votes, and at the same time wearing kid gloves, seems well nigh incredible, and yet I cannot be mistaken, for I observed with all of a boy's curiosity when seeing a new thing, and thought for a time that it was the natural color of his hands.

Kirby Benedict was something of a character, and something of an orator too. When naming some opponent whom he especially disliked, he would turn his face to the left, throw a limp, shaking hand to the right, the whole gesture indicating that he was shaking from himself the unutterable contamination which he had necessarily incurred by speaking such a name.

I had well nigh forgotten Kirby Benedict till some years ago I was reading a history of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, and there I found Benedict's name in strange association with the names of Indians and Saints. It seemed that one Indian village had the image of a saint that was supposed to have prospered it greatly, and another village, being down on its luck, borrowed the image, and was so delighted with the result that it refused to give it up again. And so a suit for the possession of the saint came before the Supreme Court of New Mexico, of which Benedict was then Chief Justice. Now the idea of Kirby Benedict

gravely passing judgment, if not on the merits, at least on the ownership of a saint, struck me as peculiarly funny, and I seemed to see the man as I remembered him so many years ago, tall of form, striking of feature, averted face, shaking hand and all.

There was once a political meeting of some sort in the court room. E. O. Smith was speaking and Seth Post interrupted by calling in question some of his statements. Relations were very much strained for a moment; Post said he had friends there who would back him, and Smith thundered back that he didn't want any backing; but at this point oil was poured on the troubled waters, and all was peace again. Ah, well there was many a wordy war in that place.

Another and more pleasing image rises before my mind. The Judge's seat, the little bar in front of it, a stove near the center of the room, the floor covered with ground tan-bark to absorb the tobacco juice and deaden the noise made by many feet; Judge David Davis on the bench, and outside of the bar, with his back to the stove and his face to the Judge, to whom he was speaking, Abraham Lincoln, tall, angular, never to be forgotten. I know not who else was present; the memory of these two men might well fill the whole room. And with this picture of a future Senator and Justice of the Supreme Court, and of a twice elected President of the United States, the liberator of the slaves, the martyr for the unity of his country, the most revered of all the citizens of Illinois, I think it well to let my memories rest.

N. M. BAKER,

August 16, 1912.















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